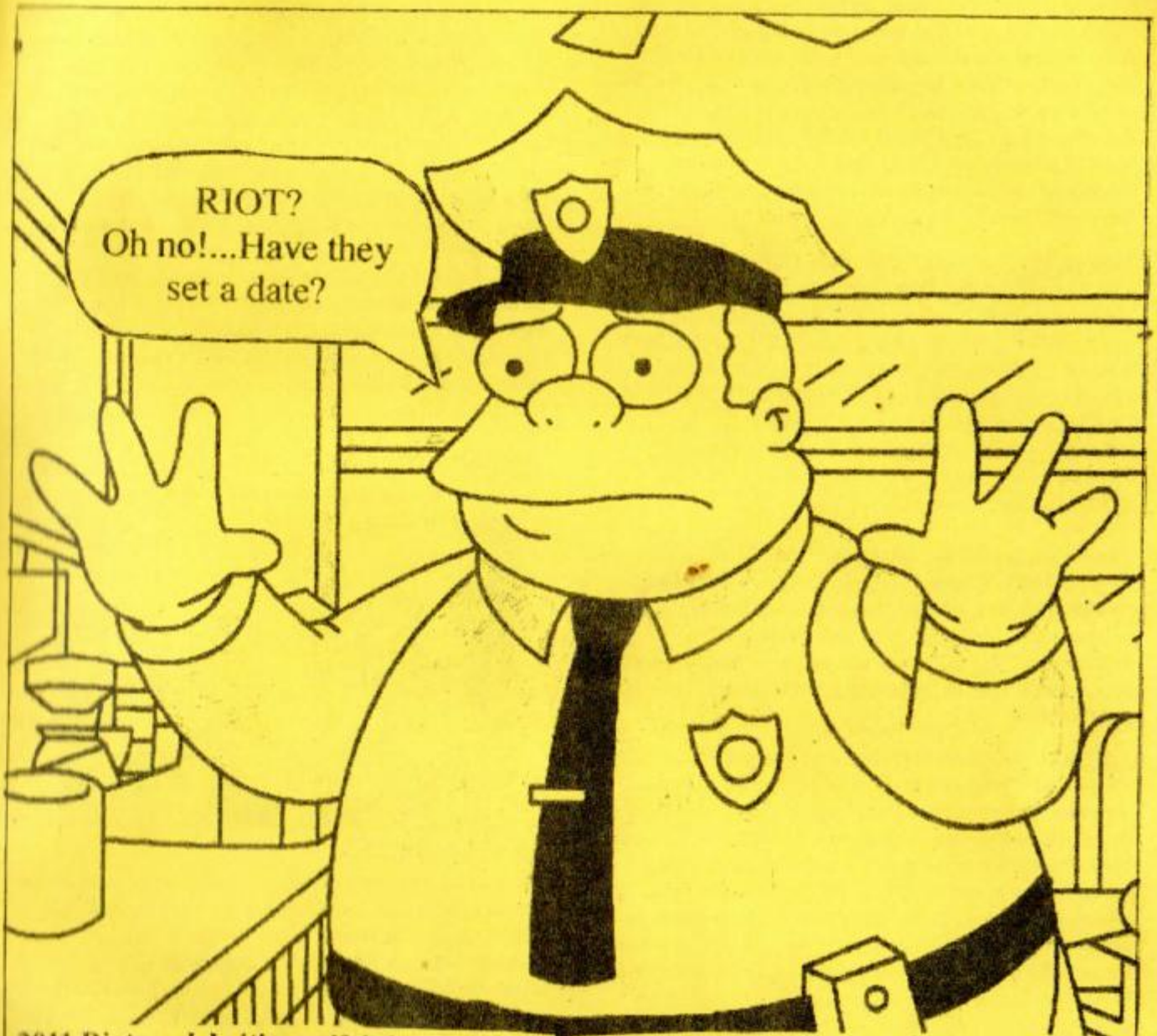
Bald Cactus

#29 £1.00



2011 Riots, celebrities, self defence, toilets, stress, Ben Corrigan on the importance of supporting fanzines, reviews, humour and general punk rock shenanigans.

ARTCORE
LEBAKKO
DANGER!MAN
THE REBEL SPELL

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I intended this issue to be done by May but due to finances mainly, I've had to wait til July to finally finish and print it. Plus I went through a couple of weeks of uninspired inactivity. Hopefully I'll be flogging these at HARD SKIN at the 1in12 in August. In fact, let's call that the launch gig. And if you read the 'interview' with Ben in here, don't worry, I'll make sure he gets one. Sorry to anyone who contributed, replyed to interviews, sent stuff to review, etc. And this is the first issue I've ever done with no contact address. I've always hated that in zines but basically I just can't afford to pay for a P.O.Box just for a zine, and I don't want all you groupie nutters knowing where I live! So, if you have any comments or want to send anything in to review/ contribute/ etc, just E-mail first. I know not everyone has a computer but there are internet cafes and libraries everywhere.

INSPIRATION: 1981, THE REBEL SPELL, ANGELIC UPSTARTS, OI POLLOI, DANGER!MAN, LEBAKKO, BRUTAL YOUTH, 'TERMINAL DECAY', The SHITTY LIMITS, ONE CAR PILE UP, VIOLENT ARREST, LEFT FOR DEAD, JETS Vs SHARKS, FOUR LETTER WORD, The DEPRAVED, The CLASH, GIMP FIST, DOA, CONFLICT, P.R.O.B.L.E.M.S, POISON IDEA, TOFU LOVE FROGS, MAU MAUS, (Canadian)SUBHUMANS, SPECIALS and George Orwell books.

Thanks a lot to: Welly, Mike Hunt, Ville LEBAKKO, Roger DANGER!MAN, Todd and Erin THE REBEL SPELL, Ben SPANNER, Danny BACK2FRONT and everyone else who responed to my 'Riot' survey, FOOTPRINT for the sound as a pound printing, and of course much love to Debs, Skye, Matilda and Harry (The Cacti family).

STUFF.....Got a text off my mate, Rob this week, wondering if I wanted to spend a night at **Dial House** with him in the summer. Turns out he asked Penny via farcebook and he said to write him a letter. Me, I'm not really interested. The days of Crass, hoards of punks streaminging in and out of the famous anarcho punk mecca, etc are long gone. There's only Penny left as far as I'm aware. Or is Gee there too? Anyway, Crass wasn't the only thing in his life and they did split up nearly 30 years ago! Surely he doesn't really still want strangers coming down to stay whenever they feel like it just cos of a band he was in that long ago. Leave an old man to his potting shed I say. **DOG ON A ROPE** seem reluctant to ever stop flogging their dead dog. 3 out of 4 of them did a gig last November for Keith's partner, Carol's 40th birthday. Johnny Rotton wannabe, Rob wouldn't do it so Dave and John HOMEBREW shared the singing duties.... Weirdly Rob was there, though he only watched and wouldn't sing. (How do you know when Rob's at the door? He always comes in at the wrong time! Boom, boom) He didn't even heckle. Not even an occasional "Bollox!". Odd. Some say he's worried that now he has Green Party ambitions, being in a punk band will be held against him, like he can't be seen to be doing *thats sort of thing*. It never stopped Bobs and ACTIVE MINDS though. Personally I think he just wanted to keep his man of mystery, aloof persona alive. Talking of old punks not giving up, I did a piece about ANTHRAX in here, about old bands reforming, and weirdly the only other gigs I've been to since are **ANGELIC UPSTARTS**, ANTISECT and The MOB. They were all great though, especially the UPSTARTS with Mensi being on top comedy form (Best quote was to the lighting people about a non too skinny Dickie sweating under the stage lights, *"Can you turn the lights down a bit...Poor Dickie's wasting away"*). And I know it's important but Mensi seemed obsessed with fascists, nearly every comment between songs involved anti-fascism, even one which pretty much said *"It doesn't matter what you are as long as you're anti-fascist"*...So any anti-fascist paedophiles out there, you're alright!... I saw a rare ANHREFN LP in Oxfam the other day (Well, I've never seen it before) but it was thirteen quid. What the fuck! I'll not be shopping there again... Isn't it funny when some punk zines have censored themselves in the past (remember f*****g 'Blown To Bits'?) and then a national newspaper doesn't. The Guardian had the words *"Fucking black cunt"* (in reference to the John Terry court case) written on the front page, twice, uncensored. Guess they can afford the fancy lawyers...

WHEN THEY CAME CANVASSING ROUND OUR WAY, WE KNEW HOW TO DEAL WITH 'EM!

RANTAPHON #6

I've known Tom through gigs for years and I had no idea he even did a zine, let alone that it's been around since 2006! I guess I just don't know people as well as I thought I did...or Tom just has a lot of secrets? Well, thank fuck this one is out cos it's a right riveting read, every spare minute I got I found myself picking this up for more of his outpouring. There's no interviews but there's still 76 pages crammed with Tom's oppinions on anything punk rock. He says what's on his mind and he's not afraid who he offends. Better watch out for a horses head in your bed after slagging off Colin Conflict Tom! Even reviews of stuff you're not particularly interested in, you've still gotta read in case Tom goes off on one. Apparently he's always making notes so the details are all here, even reviewing a years worth of MRR, individual columnists come in for critisism. This is really crammed full of articles, oppinion and reviews, plus colour photos, it's a perfect toilet read and very entertaining. Look forward to more.
tomfreefall@btinternet.com

ARTCORE

ARTCORE was one of the very first zines I bought way back then and is today probably my favourite. Welly puts a lot of effort into each issue and it shows in the layout, content and occasional accompanying record. Not afraid to speak his mind, an interview needed to be arranged, and it's not disappointing.

BC: What inspired you to start a zine in the first place? Was it your contribution to the punk scene? A vehicle for your artwork? A voice for Cardiff kids on the streets.....?

I've answered this one so many times, I'm sure everyone who cares has read this answer ten times, ha ha. I was into hardcore punk from about 1983, didn't know anyone else who was, bought MRR at the end of '85, read the zine reviews, realised you could make your own mag and get it out there, and it was the kind of thing I'd been doing since I was a kid anyway, so I went for it. I had no idea what I was doing, but it was a gateway into communicating with people globally, and being involved in the international scene. Changed my life.

BC: As well as the zine and the artwork, you have a family and job (And of course you used to be in a band and run a record shop too!). How do you manage to get the zine done, especially of the quality it is, together with accompanying records or CDs, so regular?

I don't like to do nothing. If I don't achieve something in a day, I consider it a waste. By the age of thirty I was the oldest surviving male in my family, and what with having kids, I think it made me realise that I didn't have long, and there were things I wanted to do, to have a voice, and contribute. I kinda look back at the all the things I've done as diary entries. They are things I look back on that remind me of what I was doing at a particular point. Also, my good lady is very understanding and has let me do anything I want for the last 20 years, including going on two month tours, putting out records and zines, running a record shop, putting on gigs, you name it. Without her support and understanding, I doubt I'd have done half of it.

BC: You went through a phase of not getting the zine out too regular. Did this coincide with your kids being younger? Was there ever a time during those years that you thought you'd have to give up the zine for good?

No, that was before then, in the period when I'd left college, had just met my other half, and we were unemployed and times were hard. This was the early nineties, before we had kids, during the last Tory government, and pretty much everyone I knew was on the dole. I was still working on zines, I just didn't have any money to print them, and even when I did, I'd have mail pile up and not have the money to post it. We were literally counting coins to buy tins of beans. At one point I went three years without putting out an issue, hence the low issue count for the zine in comparison to the time I've been doing it.

BC: Artcore seems to have got more regular as you've got older. Would you say you've actually got *less* jaded/ burnt out with age? What keeps you inspired?

I think I've finally got to the point where I've figured a lot of stuff out, and am better for it. I've also got to the point where I can actually get the cash together to put stuff out more regularly. Inspiration is self-generating, so I have no idea. You've just gotta keep on keeping on. I'd go nuts if I didn't have something I was working on, or had something to look forward to. It's all about moving forward. When I get something new finished, I barely look at it again, I'm off onto the next thing. I don't think I've ever been jaded, cynical yes, but not jaded.. onwards and upwards.

BC: What with Creator Graphics being a little side line earner for you, have you ever had any grief for not doing it for no profit, especially in the eighties, where you'd get dirty looks for daring to even mention the 'P' word?! (We were all guilty of that, weren't we?)

EST. 1986 PUNK ROCK

I wouldn't consider it an earner as such. I've never got grief for it. I do it cheap, as I don't see why I should do it for free. I've been doing it for free since the mid 80's, I figure I've paid my dues. If I get paid, it's a bonus, but art is totally under-appreciated, so people don't want to pay for it, and if they do, the amount they're willing to pay gets lower and lower. There's no money in this game, and when there's no money, art is the first thing to go, especially now as everybody is a highly skilled designer on their PC. When it comes to profit, I view it like this; I've never been motivated by money, and I only ever aim to break even on something. Most stuff I do, people would probably consider there to be a mark-up on it from what it cost me to make, but, knowing punk rock, I'm only ever aiming to break even. I have mountains of back issues and old releases, if you would like a private viewing in my garage. They are well hidden though, behind my large mountain of cash. If I ever make money from doing art, you can rest assured that every penny gets put right back into punk rock, as I use it to put stuff out.

BC: If any young kids are reading this who are good at art but don't have enough confidence in themselves to push and try and get it more widely accessable, what advice would you give them?

The young kids today seem infinitely more confident than when I was a kid, but I'm sure not all of them are. But just get it out there. Do it, fuck it. Find a way. It's so easy now to get what you do seen on the internet. If you really love what you do, then you're going to do it anyway, and to hell with the critics. Just drive forward, that's all you can do, while you can. Don't expect to get anywhere though, everything's a bonus. Creativity is its own reward.

BC: Why did you release the 'America's Unknown' and 'Fuck Rock' comp LPs, seeing as the material was so old? Were they well received? Are you pleased with 'Termilal Decay'? Was it planned for Burning Sensation to contribute the rather good title track or just coincidence? Do you consider this your finest zine moment to date? Was it a lot of work to put together? Any plans for vinyl with future Artcore's?

The old stuff is usually well received, apart from people like yourself who seem to perpetually view me doing it as scraping the barrel, when it's just something I'm interested in, hence putting it out there in the hope others will be too. The reason I released 'America's Unknown' was because it was the 20 year anniversary of the zine, and one of the first people I met into the same music when I started the zine, was Kip, who still writes for the zine to this day. At the time, in 1986, Kip was working on the compilation tape of the same name. I helped him put together the cover and booklet, but due to us all being unemployed, not many of them ever got made. So, I decided it would be a good idea to put it out on LP. The Fuck Rock LP came about because I'd been in touch with Freddy Wardance in the early 90's (who Kip also used to write to), and I got back in touch with him over the internet in recent years. He sent me a link to a download of this old unreleased comp. and I offered to put it out. I went halves with Aston of Boss Tuneage and we put the Wardance logo on there for nothing, and sent Freddy some copies. He also bought a load more for what it cost us. It sold out in two months. As for Terminal Decay, I was toying with the idea of doing an international compilation, and the guys who put Burning Sensation out got in touch, when I heard that song, it really fired me up, especially seeing as they were Australian and you never get to hear of many new bands from there. The fact that it became the title track was because originally, one of the first bands asked was 1981, and I was going to open up the LP with their song 'Decay' and close with Burning Sensation's 'Terminal Decay'. This is where I got the theme of decay for the artwork. Yeah, it's a pretty good achievement, something I wanted to do. I would do it again, but I've got to break even on it first. There will hopefully be more Artcore vinyl, don't know what yet, but no doubt people will say it's 'weird and boring' and 'scraping the barrel'. You just can't please some people, but I'm not forcing them to read it either, ha ha.

BC: Just like zines, there seems less proper punk art around these days. Does this frustrate or annoy you at all? Which punk artists have inspired you the most? Are there any new ones who've caught your eye recently? Is there any record sleeves that make you think "Fuck, I wish I'd done that piece of work"?

Well it tallies with these convenient and lazy times that there's less 'punk' art about. It's also to do with the zeitgeist as what is considered good art changes, and like everything, it's a cycle, so you'll see everything come in and out of fashion, just like the music. One year it'll be cartoons, the next it'll be arty photography. I don't really get frustrated as such, it just changes. I hate my art anyway. Give it anywhere from 24 hours to two years, and I will look back on something and hate it. I'm driven by improving, I don't think most of what I've done to be any good, you have to understand this. I'm not some egomaniac, I am my own worst critic, on a personal and creative level. I guess some people would look at all the things I do and think it is because I think I'm fucking brilliant. This couldn't be further from the truth. Artists that have influenced my stuff span everything really, it's whatever you

like. As for punk rock, all the old artists I've had in the zine have been an influence, from Shawn Kerri to Vince Ransid, from Squeal to Jeff Nelson. You just absorb everything, and what comes out, comes out, at a later date. I wouldn't say I see things and wish I'd done it, because that's impossible, as I didn't do it. But you see stuff and appreciate, as well as seeing other stuff, and think it's crap.

BC: Your experience with Four Letter Word (especially bass players) seems to have left you bitter? Is their some sort of South Wales bass players curse?! Has it put you off ever getting any other bands together? You must have some great memories of time with the band too though? Did you ever do 'Access Denied' live? (You would never play it if I asked and on one occasion you got quite aggro about it!)

NIGHT BIRDS | ARCTIC FLOWERS | 1981 | RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA | HYGIENE

I'm not bitter, it's over. People seem to take things too seriously that I write in the zine. The stuff about the bassists, was written as humour. My sense of humour is pretty dry, and I'm sarcastic.. Take my zine with a pinch of salt. The band is over, I wrote that to get it out of my system. Like I said, it's a diary entry, it's in the past. There's only one or two people that were in the band that I genuinely have no time for any more, that's only because they lied repeatedly. I have no time for liars, that's borne of experience. Twenty years is a long time for a band. We did a lot of stuff, and yes, of course I have some great memories. You wouldn't know it now, but we achieved a hell of a lot for a punk band from South Wales, for the era we existed. As for 'Access Denied', it was an album out-take that went on the b-side of a 7", and with every line-up change invariably old songs would drop off the set list, and new people wouldn't have even heard, let alone learnt to play. For some reason, you loved this song, and would hassle me to play it every time you saw us. The time I lost my rag with you, I'd just got to the venue in London, I was stressed, nervous, and as I walked into a packed venue in broad daylight, you walked straight up to me and shouted 'Access Denied! Access Denied! Access Denied!' six inches from my face. Maybe try a little empathy? I apologise for that, but we were both at fault in that situation. I'm sure that flies in the face of your favourite pub tale about how much of I twat I am, but that's what happened, from my perspective. Besides it's been a long time since I even thought about it.

BC: Ha, I didn't actually expect you to remember the exact gig in question! It is still a great song though.
How does todays punk scene compare to the eighties for you, especially with the advent of the internet, decline in snail mail, mix tapes, etc. Do you still get as excited now when discovering new bands as when you did back then?

Well, were always going to view our own formative years with rose tinted specs, it's inevitable. So of course, I'm going to say it was better in a myriad of ways, but what purpose does it serve? To remind those younger, yet again, that they missed out, that they were born too late? I think this taps into part of why there's so much slavish imitation of old styles, but that which falls short in content. If everyone thinks they have to try and attain something that is untouchable, how is the music moving forward? What I miss is when the international punk scene seemed to progress, the conversation pushed everything forward. With each new year came a new slant, a new topic, and everyone felt part of this global movement. Obviously, there's lots of things you can pin on it changing; commerce, internet etc. What I find is, it's harder to discover new bands that blow you away. I could be a miserable old grumpy bastard and say it's because nothing good is coming out, but it's probably as much to do with me being old. I see kids getting excited about stuff that to me is run of the mill and unremarkable. This says something about age, and it also says something about youth. Because, a lot of what we were raving about when we were 18, probably wasn't as good as we thought, it was just we were caught up in something and involved in what was happening at that time. But yes, I still do find stuff that blows me away, it's just not as often. And Andy, 'mix' tapes? Seriously? When did compilation tapes start being called that? Next you'll be telling me you go to 'shows'. Dude.

BC: Shit, you got me there. I'm usually good at avoiding Americanisms, guess that one kinda slipped by, huh!
In my class questionairre in the last issue you said you were working class and that it was very important to you. Can you expand on this?

It's important to me because it's part of my identity, and it should be important to everyone who isn't rich, because it's been a big part of the trick for decades to convince working class people that they are in fact middle class, when they are not. It's all part of the psychology of the shift to the right. It started with Thatcher, was perpetuated by Blair, and look at where it's got us now? If the majority of working class people in this country, woke up from their tabloid and iPhone coma, and realised that they are not middle class, just working class people mortgaged up to their eyeballs, then we might

just start to see some change. It's part of the top down class war to create a situation using the media, whereby if more people believe they are middle class, and can attain a level of debt-fuelled gadget comfort to reinforce this illusion, then you have control. You shift the political mood to the right, and continue shifting it to the right. All the while, what people perceive to be middle class, are what is now known as Chavs. They have created a new underclass. It's about snobbery, it's about a culture of fear and moral panic, it's about everyone looking at down their nose at everyone else. It's the same old divide and rule tactic that plays out day in day out, perpetuated by the government-speak media. I am working class, because I grew up on a council estate, with little prospects. 'Opportunities' aren't designed for people like me. I don't have a 'career', I work a dead end job. I've got a BTEC HND, but it doesn't mean shit when you have a council estate address on your CV. There are millions like me. We are part of the last 'lost generation', terminal underachievers overqualified for their menial jobs. You will hear the media always talking about 'lost generations' in the future tense, never the past, because that alludes to their own failure. But each one has been the same. There is no 'squeezed middle', it's a myth. They sold people their council houses to do this, they vilified the unions, they gave everyone cheap trinkets to pacify them, but what they actually did was destroy working class belief in the working class, because an atomised and divided working class does not resist economic warfare, and in fact, some of them even end up rooting for the rich guy. How fucking ironic is that?

BC: You clearly and rightly hate the Tories for what they did to working communities in South Wales and the rest of the UK, but what about the so called 'opposition'. Is democracy just an illusion? Have/would you ever vote 'tactically' and does tactical voting work, or is it really just a con designed to deceive us into thinking we have a say?

Of course democracy is an illusion. Although it still must work to a certain extent, otherwise the Tory party wouldn't go to such great lengths to to try to gerrymander the system in their favour. I've always voted, I've come close to not voting, but the way I see it, is if people like me and you don't vote, there's only one outcome, more right wing government for the rich. You hear it in the work place every day perpetuated by the Murdoch press; "Oh, they're all the same, there's no point, there's no difference." Well, that's just a convenient belief system put in place to perpetuate that shift to the right as far as I'm concerned. "The unions are a waste of time"; the billionaires who print the papers, control the media and work the puppets, like nothing more than for you to think there's no point and no hope. Because they know which kind of people won't be voting out of apathy and cynicism, and it won't be the rich. They're always motivated, and they have the cash, just like religions, always there pushing their agenda and lobbying for change they want. We all know that there's no real left or opposition in this country anymore on the mainstream political stage, they've mostly been bought, they're on the payroll. But there is still one difference, and it is a choice between the fundamental belief in a safety net for those on the brink, and the fundamental belief in blind and corrupt support for the rich. And that is what it comes down to, and we are seeing that right now. The 'Labour' party have long since lost their way, and also fell under the spell of the Murdoch machine. Even they believe that people are becoming more right wing, because they've lost their way in their 'Westminster Bubble' reading a media owned by billionaires influencing everything, shifting the debate to the right, ensuring that the 'centre ground that wins elections' is also moving further right, to justify the wholesale sell-off of everything the people ever paid for to be built in this country, everything the people ever fought for, either being taken back or given away, because they rely on people not knowing their history, blaming other poor people like immigrants, or have just given up altogether. Fear, despair and hate are election winners. We desperately need a change, but the cards are stacked. I have no solutions, but I know that sitting on my hands, does nothing but hand them more power. Their strength lies in part in our ignorance and our isolation. I try to talk to people, just to show that not everyone has given up. A vote may be worthless, it may change nothing, and perpetuate the status quo, but at least it cancels the vote of a self-serving rich bastard or a racist, because you know damn well that they are going to make the effort. That's how I see it.

BC: So your kids are nearly grown up now. How did your punk rock attitude to life help shape the way they were brought up? Did you try to steer them away from exploitative chart music and more towards alternative sounds, or did you just leave them to find their own niche? What did they make of Four Letter Word? Are they proud of you or are you the embarrassing punk dad doing dad dancing at school events?!!

I have no idea, I guess it's bound to have had an effect. I didn't really need to steer them away from chart music, as its influence on TV is nowhere near what it used to be, and we don't listen to the radio. I don't know what they make of the old band, or what I do, I don't really think about it. They are their own people, and they can do what they please with their lives. I hope that some of my words have sunk in, but only in the sense that they don't end up debt slaves or having miserable lives. I just hope they're happy, if they like things I happen to like, so be it.

BC: People that know you tell me you can be a miserable, grummpy old git! What actually makes you smile/ laugh?
On some of his many visits, my good old friend 'Skinny' Jon Evans said that people 'oop norf' have sometimes asked what I'm like. I had no idea why people would give a shit, but I had no idea he was broadcasting to all and sundry that I was a miserable, grumpy old git...oh well, I spend most of my time with my family now, and we seem to spend most of that time laughing. Yeah, I used to moan a lot, mainly because being in a band was a thankless task, as was running a record shop. I find now that I'm not contributing as much, I'm happier with my lot. I just realised that trying to 'do stuff' these days is largely pointless. People generally don't support anything anymore, as they're only interested in you supporting them, or getting in a froth about the soup of the day. The upside is, not doing these things, also means I no longer see people who were making me miserable. No-one ever said we all had to get on just because we had similar record collections. It's funny, cuz when I was a kid, I had a rough time at home, and relied heavily on friends. Years later, it's gone full circle and I've realised that my family are paramount. If I seem miserable to you, maybe you should ask yourself why, ha ha ha ha ha!

BC: It's time for the old desert island discs thing that you love to do: So come on, name ten records you would rescue first in a house fire?
I reckon I'd definitely have time to grab more than ten, but not enough to grab specific ones. It'd probably be A through D or something like that. I hope that never happens though. What a stupid fucking question.

BC: Any final words of wisdom, plugs, etc?
Read Artbore – made by and for miserable, grumpy old gits, who enjoy reading about the weird and boring, while scraping the fucking barrel. Visit my website and spend a big wad of cash so I can keep up my nice little earners, and live in the manner to which I'm accustomed...www.artcorefanzine.co.uk – irregular since 1986.

Bald Cactus top 10 Four Letter Word tunes
1: Momento Mori (Zero Visibility CD)
2: Access Denied (b side of '...Lucky, Punk? 7")
3: Make Me A Winner (Zero Visibility CD)
4: Call Off The Dogs (Words That Burn 7")
5: A Cold Day In Hell (CDEP)
6: Scared Of The Dark (Like Moths... CD)
7: One To Two (A Cold Day...CD)
8: Johnny Foreigner (Crimewave 7")
9: Chemical Sunrise (A Nasty Piece Of Work LP)
10: Subterranean Zone (Zero Visibility CD)

Pounds for Penny

So hot sell out news of the issue has to be Penny Rimbaud for lending out his distinctive and unmistakable drumming talents for BBC's Crimewatch programme. Apparently he's been offered other prime time slots too, including Question Time and The One Show! Watch this space to see how far he's willing to go to finally distance himself from his CRASS legacy! *

NOT an interview with Ben Corrigan!

"Best of luck talking to him....he'll be drunk or a wanker"
(Sean after passing on ben's E-mail))

BC: Hi Ben,
Got your E-mail off Sean.
When Hard Skin play in Leeds in Dec can I come down early and interview you (just you...cos of your band pedigree/ CV)
What's the date by the way? I know it's Brudenell Social Club.
Cheers
Andy
BEN: What? Are you serious?
Why do you want to interview me?

BC: Thatcher On Acid, Schwartzeneggar, The Tone, Hard Skin...need I say more? You've been in some of my favourite bands and I think it'd be interesting to talk punk rock history with you.
By the way, Sean said you'd either be drunk or a wanker!!!
Cheers
Andy
BEN: hmmm.
I have nothing to say.

BC: Just been listening to "The Illusion Of Being Together", remembering what a great album it is. Sure you wouldn't be up for a recorded chat?
Andy
BEN: NOPE

BC: Misserable twat!
BEN: That would be "miserable".

And there you go. I'm not sure if it's because Sean was right, or because when I interviewed The TONE in a previous issue they thought the questions were weird, or Ben was just being a miserable twat? Whatever the reason for the curt replies (Not even a '*Thanks but no thanks*'), Ben's response pissed me off enough to avoid the HARD SKIN Leeds Xmas gig!..No wonder Steve Ignorant tried to glass him! (See Steve's book)

* NOT NECESSARILY TRUE.

RIOT!

I was originally inspired to ask the following question to Spanner and the Autonomads after they both did benefits for the people arrested at the 2011 riots. Subsequently I thought it'd be good to get a wide range of oppinions, something similar to last issues 'class' survey. I didn't get as much response, possibly due to the fact that the riots are hardly recent news, or maybe not everyone has a strong oppinion either way. Whatever, the ones I got back are interesting and varied and here it all is:

Question to SPANNER and AUTONOMADS:
After the summer 2011 riots, I have to confess to being slightly surprised to see anarchists involved in support of those arrested. To me, the rioters seemed to be selfish, opportunist kids out to get whatever they could for themselves and sod the consequences. I didn't see any politics there and to be honest I wouldn't trust most of those involved. Am I missing something here? Am I falling for the media version of events? Please tell us from an anarchist point of view why the rioters should be supported.

Response from SPANNER
"They call it looting and criminality. It's not – there's a real hatred against the system" - unemployed youth from Hackney.

People in Tottenham were angry about the police execution of another black man after which they lied yet again. There is widespread hatred of cops due to every-day harrassment, stop-and-search, and brutality against young people. There is no faith in the justice system to bring killer cops to account so instead people will make them pay on the streets. People's spontaneous anger does not come neatly packaged and demonstrations and riots can turn ugly. We sympathise with those who have lost homes and property in indiscriminate looting and burning and we do not support people using a riot to engage in anti-social violence against their own communities.
But we will always stand with people who fight back and refuse to put up with endless attacks on us all from police, politicians and bosses alike.
Last year the combined fortunes of the thousand richest people in Britain rose by thirty per cent to £334 billion. The banks have been bailed out with our money to protect the wealth of their investors while the bankers and bosses continue to be paid huge bonuses and avoid paying taxes. The MPs expences scandal has also shown their double standards and hypocrisy when it comes to taking what you can get. This is 'looting' on a massive scale with far more serious effects for people everywhere.

"There's nothing for us" - unemployed youth from hackney.

Huge divisions of wealth and opportunities are ever more visible and government cuts are punishing the working class for the greed of the rich. Add to this shut down youth clubs, cuts to services, no access to education, escalating unemployment, criminalisation of young people, and police racism – is it any wonder people's anger has boiled over. The increasing feeling of 'them-and-us' is a social time bomb.
Politicians have shown their fear of losing control when people take to the streets, calling the rioters sick, mindless and evil. They say violence is never justified whilst the state kills with impunity and bombs innocent civilians around the world. Yet they will not admit that the anger and violence on our streets are a product of an unequal and unjust society based on greed. The looters are working class people taking back all the things we are told we need but can't afford. Contrary to the media hysteria those involved are not demons or outsiders. To respond with vengeance, blame and punishment is to divert attention from the real problems caused by the capitalist system. The corporate media is cheerleading fore the clampdown and is being used as a weapon to keep us divided, fearing each other, and arguing for more control. So the 'justice' system goes into over-drive with calls to 'get tough', more weapons for cops, harsh prison sentences to set an example, control of social media and the expansion of the surveillance society. The solution is not more of the same from the government. All they offer is more repression and control and more cuts and division between the have and have-nots. Anarchists believe in revolutionary political, economic and social change. We see the recent unrest as a step towards people collectively challenging the power of our rulers. Anarchy is not the same as a riot. There are many ways to fight for a better world – a riot is just one of them.
Stay free and keep fighting. See you on the streets.

The following is taken from a **Statement from Bristol Defendant Solidarity:**
People are rightly angry at the state of the world around us. We will continue to challenge their control of our lives and their plans for our future. We wont let ourselves be divided into "good" and "bad" demonstrators and nor will we be intimidated to the point of staying safe indoors. So expect more mass arrests, routinised police violence and prisons bursting (or perhaps burning?) with prisoners of the class war. Let's not forget, as hysterical media leads calls for more weapons for the police, that

the recent riots erupted after a young man was murdered by armed cops and 1400 people have lost their lives in the U.K. Since 1991 at the hands of the "keepers of the peace". Next time it could be one of your friends, family or yourself on the receiving end of the law. Let's be clear: their judicial process is a sham and has nothing to do with justice and everything to do with protecting a system based on extreme violence and looting on a massive scale. Guilt or innocence are not important to lying, violent cops, rulers or lawmakers and people will be imprisoned for little or nothing more than going on a demonstration, saying the wrong thing on facebook, questioning authority, being politically active, being in the wrong place at the wrong time or stealing a few packets of fags. It's times like these, when the gloves are coming off, that we really get to see the state we're in. We send respect and solidarity to all those awaiting trial, in court or imprisoned after the riots this year (2011). We want them to know they are not alone and certainly not forgotten. We will continue to support anyone arrested or imprisoned as a result of demos, riots, direct action and escalating class war. Rulers and their tools of repression don't always have it all their way: many people evade "justice", don't get caught, win in court, get cases dropped, successfully challenge punitive bail conditions and sue the police for abuse of power. We believe that real solidarity between us gets results and can keep us all safe and strong, free and fighting on.

I then basically asked everyone else; Did you support the riots? Could you relate to them? Did they scare/ Worry you? Was there anything about them that related to your beliefs? I want honest views. Don't just say "Yeah, riot, anarchy!".

Dear Andy,
Last years riot-fest to me was a joke. They weren't actually protesting against anything, for crying out loud they were more interested in stealing clothes and TV's...Yes I agree it did leave the opportunity for the real anarcho's/class fighters to go out and smash the banks, but on a whole the media painted a picture of bollox. It was a disgrace to me, I consider myself to have and support anarchist theories and such...but that was not anarchy in a constructive way, nothing was achieved other than more liberties taken away and old men getting killed. Fantaste...
The main theme that really came out of the riots was that no one listens or cares about the younger generation in our society and this is not a new phenomenon, it's been a consistent for ever more or less...people get angry and quite rightly so, shame it wasn't more organised and society wasn't given a proper kicking up the ass...it's crap on the bottom of the shit pile (pun intended), when you sit on the bottom trying to survive on next to nothing and some rich twat just smiles at you...But really, it looked more like a farce than anything else, rise up, stand up and fight for your life, not your TV...
Dave Scragg, Staffs.

I don't think most people knew why they were rioting and the original reason got totally lost. I didn't feel this was a political protest of any kind and by looting and burning down local people's business and homes they played into the hands of the politicians who wrote them off as mindless thugs. If people are pissed off with their lives and the politicians who make decisions that maintain inequality then they should protest against those with the power. People were not looting for essentials like food but luxurys like TV's, and other electrical goods and cigarettes and booze, this is greed born out of capitalism and indicative of how spoilt many of us are in this country. Some people are dis-empowered in this country but it didn't seem to be those people who were rioting and again, why take from those who do not hold the power and maintain the status quo?
Julie, Lancaster.

Did I support the riots?
No because a lot of innocent people got caught up in them. Burning out small businesses is indefensible, as well as surrounding properties.
Could I relate to them?
Yes in a way. The Tory fuckers are taking away everything from ordinary youths, from job opportunities to benefits to youth centres, which is a recipe for disaster, so yes I could understand why people with nothing would be walking past a looted shop and delve in and grab something to sell for a few pints. The harsh reality is, leave people with nothing and they will take any chance they can to make money.
Did they scare me?
No, I live 300 miles from most of 'em. But I felt sorry for the locals living nearby due to the mindless indiscriminate attacks on local businesses- imagine living above a burning shop. Like I said earlier, innocent people – many of whom hate the government as much as the rioters do – lost their homes and businesses.
Anything related to my beliefs?
These weren't political actions so I can't really answer that. I do think the vicar or priest who said years ago in the media that "When you have nothing anyone's property becomes yours" is especially true these days. The media as usual failed to ask the obvious question – why were normal kids prepered to take part in actions that turned out to be very serious (trumped up charges/ sentences)? The answer is of course in the words of James Pursey "What have we got? We got fuck all". These were the blown fuse of an angry and neglected youth. The more mundane everyday reality before and after the riots being people starving, having to beg their mates for money after having their benefits stopped,

people with mental problems sent over the edge / driven to suicide, a complete lack of hope. All of this is ignored by the same media that screams outrage when it does kick off, and that to me makes them no better than the rioters themselves.
Trev, C0. Durham.

"But you get to the place
Where the real slavedrivers live
It's walled off by riot squad
Aiming guns right at your heads
So you turn right round
And play right into their hands
And set your own neighborhood
Burning to the ground instead"

"Riot – the unbeatable high
Riot – shoots your nerves to the sky
Riot – playing into their hands
Tomorrow you're homeless
Tonight it's a blast"
(Dead Kennedys 'Riot')

I was away when I found out about the riots. That was the reason that I sang 'Panic' by The Smiths on the karaoke that night. I felt a sense of frustration for not being at home whilst it was taking place, and then I remembered I was at a party on the beach by the Black Sea.
At the time my initial reaction was cynicism towards the intentions of the rioters – probably due to The Guardian being the only source of news that I used. Back home, after closer inspection, and having read a wider range of sources; I became more sympathetic towards the anger of the rioters, yet I still had reservations.
What surprised me, happened during the first term of the new academic year, after I taught my citizenship classes about what had happened. I presented all of them with an array of options on the reasons for the riots. After marking their books, I noticed that 80% of them chose their main reason as either; government spending cuts, institutional racism from the police, or lack of career opportunities. That's when I knew that I supported the riots.
Relating to those taking part is not an issue; most people are preoccupied with petty differences and individualism these days. This was an attack on the (the unequal nature of) property, not on people. There really was no need to have been scared, although the moral panic whipped up by the media did give the masses a reason to be.
The determinant relation I have to 'them' is not in any 'individual meaning' that 'they' attached to the event, it is through 'their' collective mass of resistant energy.
Whether those involved realise it or not, there is something wrong and something needs to change.
I am an enemy of capitalism. Riots are an inevitable reaction to it's horrifically unequal system. There is not enough room for the other 99% of people at the top. Humanity is starting to experience and understand inequality in greater depths, as the fog of their false class conscience starts to disappear. Perhaps the dawning of that epoch known as 'Communism' is about to finally dawn on us?
Free market neo-liberal economics has failed.
Luke, Ont Road Fanzine, Leeds.

Fat Bob from Hard Skin says this about riotz
Yeah, riot, anarchy.
Plus still got a few trainers, mobile phones and a mad range of stuff from JD Sports. (Great shop by the way)
Fuck off
Fat Bob, Gypsy Hill, London.

The Riot Stuff

It's easy to take the moral high ground over the riots. It's easy to be Mr Angry of Tonbridge Wells. It's easy to brand those seeking reasons for the trouble as "apologists". It's even easier to tell the Daily Mail to go and fuck itself because it doesn't know what it's talking about. It's even easier to be a keyboard warrior and think that some cunt cares what you think. Personally, I'm hoping that cunt might be you.
I don't like violence – it fucking scares me – I don't want people to hit me, cut me, burn me, shoot me or hit me with a bottle. Therefore, riots scare me. The thought of riots scare me. The thought of pain scares me. The thought of getting beaten to death scares me. And fucking riot police scare me even more than the fucking riots.
Daily Mail readers don't get shot by the police. Daily Mail readers don't have to beg, borrow and steal to survive. Daily Mail readers wouldn't know poverty until it moved in next door and "brought the tone of the area down". As I said, it's easy to condemn.
I don't live in London. I wasn't there – I was in Blackpool listening to Hard Skin at Rebellion – so I don't know what went down. And to be totally fucking honest, I've never been that poor, that desperate, or that hated by the police. I really don't know what it fucking feels like. The cops don't know what it fucking feels like. And the judge sure as fuck don't know what it fucking feels like.
This week (as in as I write this) a judge jailed a huntsman for FOUR YEARS for rape. Is busting up a shop as bad as rape? Can insurance money make everything alright after rape? I don't fucking think so.
Camercunt used his judge mate to stamp down really fucking hard on the unruly peasants – and the right-wing press finger-fucked his arsehole right through the sorry charade.
Of course a few violent twats used it as an excuse to annihilate their community, to steal a new pair of £300 trainers and to kick the shit out of people. Of course, these people are scum.
You don't shit in your own backyard. You don't beat on your own community. And you don't give the fucking police an excuse – they don't fucking need one.
So let's get constructive, let's get creative and let's tear the fucking system down without stamping our community into the ground!
Paul Initonit, Lines.

The initial trigger for the riots that some saw as taking a stand against the state and a cry of desperation from an abandoned underclass, was soon extinguished by a wave of greed and desire to smash the shit out of all and sundry that dared stand in the way of the clueless cunts that went on the rampage – mainly comprised of the "gimme gimme all but contribute fuck all generation" that has been raised whilst suckling on the teet of celebrity culture and instant gratification. The lack of opportunity and amenities in many areas of England is not going to be improved when scarce resources are channelled into repairing riot damage. How many of the independent traders who often employ local underskilled people have not been able to re-open? Burning working class people out of their flats is hardly taking a radical stance against the state is it? So no way could I support this action and struggled to understand it – as for it relating to my beliefs, well even if I had only studied in the Exploited school of Anarchy, this shit did not even come close to my way of thinking

PS – To highlight how clueless some of these rioters were, they tried it on in Wolves shitty centre where there are hardly any shops left – not even going to be a decent source of looting is it?
Cheers and beers, Tom Freefall, Wolves.

The riots in the summer have generally been looked at from two opposing perspectives, both of which are sort pf right and sort of wrong if you ask me. The left leaning, anarcho, anti-globalisation, anti-everything side would have you believe that this was a huge counter culture protest by people disenfranchised by mainstream society and politics. A group of young people so disillusioned and enraged by persistant police harrassment, unemployment, poverty and complete lack of social mobility that they took to the streets to fight the police, destroy the society that has left them out and take something back. The reactionary, right wing opposite angle would have us believe these are scumbags, an underclass of dole scroungers, lazy and unwilling to take part in conventional society and happy to loot, rob and destroy all that is good and right, taking the easy option rather than the good old fashioned protestant work ethic. You can argue both angles all day but both have merit I'm sad to say. I can see the "political" intent if you attack McD*****s and high street banks to show your discust at US cultural imperialism or the financial crisis we've been plunged in to by the banks. Lobbing bricks and sticks at the police when you've had enough of being "stopped and searched" is directing your fury at those that have caused it. I can even, at a push, get the idea that a bunch of scrotes breaking in to a sports chain and making off with trainers is "property redistribution" but do you honestly think that this is what the rioters had in mind? I doubt it. There was indiscriminate rioting, assaults, arson, thieving and whatever else. Businesses ran by families for a hundred years burnt to the ground or looted, innocent people attacked and robbed and sadly people killedwho were only trying to defend their neighbourhood, their families and their houses or businesses. You want to talk about working class anger and "power to the people"? Those folk that took to the streets to stop their streets being destroyed by the mob, they were not the ones who hassass peopl on the street and have people mysteriously die in custody. They weren't the greedy bankers who gambled away all the tax payers money. They aren't to blamefor massive unemployment and sweeping draconian benefit clamp downs. I don't believe it was them responsible for the rising tide of unemployment while the rich sit back in their second homes and slap each other on the back with tax breaks and scandalous expenses claims. The riots were a wake up call, a timely two fingers in the air to the despicable Clegg and Cameron and co's discraceful government but sadly they mainly hurt the wrong people. Marv Gadgie, Boston.

A Riot of Reasons - Why only community Solidarity can bring about Radical Social Change – DANNY BZF

The sensationalist headlines that followed the recent spate of riots, looting and arson across England recently are a reminder of the insidious nature of the media as a propaganda machine for the state and the enforcement of social mores. Repeat a lie often enough, as Herr Goebbels would remind us...

The subsequent orgy of throwing the book at all arrested is at the behest of Mr. Cameron who likes to flex the full extent of the law. Prison populations rose by 100 per day in the aftermath of the riots according to Ministry of Justice findings, warning that the Prison system was unprepared for such a deluge. Of course contingency plans were soon in operation; as the State doesn't like to be caught with its pants down.

Although old news by now the riots have served as a propaganda platform for the condemnation of anarchists. The Metropolitan police were forced into an embarrassing climbdown after a cop shop in west London, published a leaflet asking the public to report anyone with anarchist sympathies. "*Anarchism is a political philosophy which considers the state undesirable, unnecessary and harmful, and instead promotes a stateless society, or anarchy. Any information relating to anarchists should be reported to your local police.*"

The civil disturbance that ensued was not the work of anarchists. The events were initially sparked by the death of Mark Duggan who had been killed by police in Tottenham. A vigil protest against the police-related death was subsequently provoked by cops - now widely accepted as the catalyst for the subsequent rioting. But of course it was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back.

All races came out, defying attempts by the Far Right to make political capital but 5 people died and many more were injured in the upswell that followed while some £200million of damage to property was caused. It is interesting to note the amount of media attention given to these events in relation to the riots in Northern Ireland sparked during the 2011 'season of hate' only a month before.

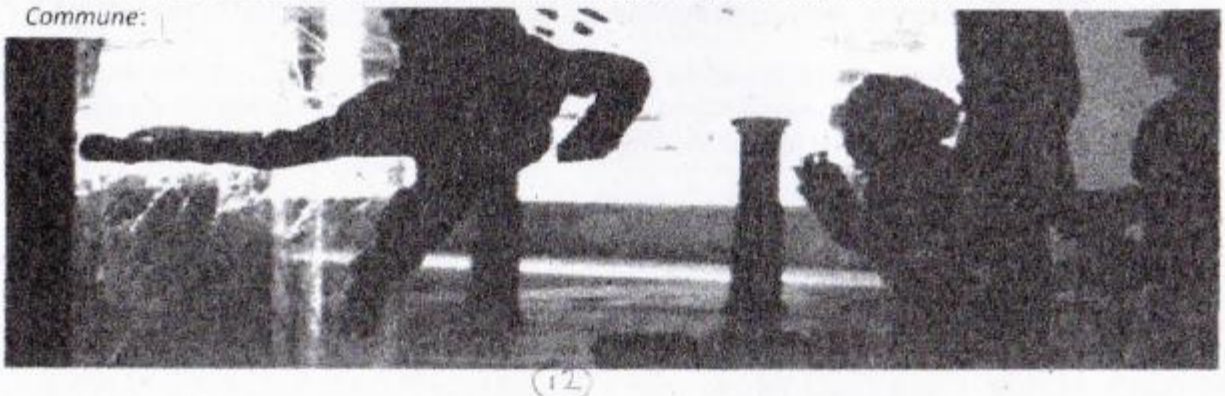
Disgruntled UVF members had attacked the nationalist Short Strand area in June this year leading to the inevitable clashes, with shots being fired at one stage and one photographer wounded. There were riots and civil unrest in other parts of Belfast, Portadown, Ballymena, Derry, Newry and Larne during the marching season and yet these events were but a footnote in UK media. Certainly events in England were on a greater scale but it serves as a reminder of how the media big-up certain events while rescaling others to suit their agenda. In the case of our wee corner of the former empire diminishing these events is designed to bolster a carefully branded Peace Process but in England it has become a propaganda war against dissent.

There is anger under the surface of working communities, the underclass, the dispossessed. You don't need to have a degree in sociology to work that one out; but that anger is disorganised and chaotic. In the editorial mind of The Sun it was "*anarchy, pure and simple*", and to the Tories it was as usual the breakdown of what they like to call '*traditional law and order*'. The riots were largely economical, not so much political, and they certainly involved gangs, though gangs themselves are created by capitalism as is oft overlooked. It is lamentable that many of these gangs targeted their own people and communities rather than concentrating their rage at the steps of their masters.

The suffering now commonplace in working communities has been wiped away by smug assurances that we're all in this together when it is quite clear that we are being abused on a daily basis. Basic foodstuffs and fuel costs are soaring; redundancies are a daily reality; a university education is now the sole privilege of the rich; hospitals are losing facilities or being shut down; and the financial future of the majority is insecure and uncertain. It is no wonder communities are ready to erupt.

The sickening self-righteousness of those condemning the ensuing violence while supporting the purchase of £4billion of nuclear submarines or the ongoing slaughtering of farmers in Iraq and Afghanistan to ensure a steady oil supply to maintain their markets reveals the rank hypocrisy of the State and their utter disdain for working people.

The State encourages us to take what we want, it bombards us with deceptive and insidious advertising that products make us feel better while simultaneously crushing us with austerity measures - the eruption of the unheard however must be channeled into revolutionary momentum according to *The Commune*:



"It is no accident that the riots are happening now, as the support nets for Britain's disenfranchised are dragged away and people are left to fall into the abyss, beaten as they fall by the batons of the Metropolitan Police. But there should be no excuses for the burning of homes, the terrorising of working people. Whoever did such things has no cause for support. We believe that the legitimate anger of the rioters can be far more powerful if it is directed in a collective, democratic way and seeks not to victimise other workers, but to create a world free of the exploitation and inequality inherent to capitalism."

Previous incidents of serious civil disorder in England, such as the Oldham riots in 2001 or the Brixton riots in 1981, led to government-commissioned inquiries and reviews. Lord Scarman's public inquiry into the Brixton disturbances, which were followed by further rioting in Toxteth, Liverpool, in the same year, proved a watershed moment for social policy, warning that urgent action was required to tackle racial disadvantage and distrust in the police. The government has resisted calls for a public inquiry into the August riots, which flared in most of London's boroughs and spread to parts of Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham, Liverpool and Gloucester.

Instead of an inquiry we get the propaganda. Boff Whalley from the anarchist band Chumbawamba wrote in the Independent:

"ANARCHY SPREADS!" So ran the front-page headlines of The Daily Telegraph and the Daily Mail this week. Add in the Daily Star's "ANARCHY IN THE UK" and The Sun's "ANARCHY" and you have the print media's current (and ongoing) favourite catch-all word: anarchy. Just the ticket for a spot of lazy demonising."

Andrew Maxwell, an Irish comedian, put it best: *"Create a society that values material things above all else. Strip it of industry. Raise taxes for the poor and reduce them for the rich and for corporations. Prop up failed financial institutions with public money. Ask for more tax, while vastly reducing public services. Put adverts everywhere, regardless of people's ability to afford the things they advertise. Allow the cost of food and housing to eclipse people's ability to pay for them. Light blue touch paper."*

The Solidarity Federation offers:

" The fury of the estates is what it is, ugly and uncontrolled. But not unpredictable. Britain has hidden away its social problems for decades, corralled them with a brutal picket of armed men. Growing up in the estates often means never leaving them, unless it's in the back of a police van. In the 1980s, these same problems led to Toxteth. In the '90s, contributed to the Poll Tax riots. And now we have them again - because the problems are not only still there, they're getting worse.

So there should be no shock that people living lives of poverty and violence have at last gone to war. It should be no shock that people are looting plasma screen TVs that will pay for a couple of months' rent and leaving books they can't sell on the shelves. For many, this is the only form of economic redistribution they will see in the coming years as they continue a fruitless search for jobs.
Much has been made of the fact that the rioters were attacking "their own communities." But riots don't occur within a social vacuum. Riots in the eighties tended to be directed in a more targeted way; avoiding innocents and focusing on targets more representative of class and race oppression: police, police stations, and shops.

What's happened since the eighties? Consecutive governments have gone to great lengths to destroy any sort of notion of working class solidarity and identity. Is it any surprise, then, that these rioters turn on other members of our class? We believe that the legitimate anger of the rioters can be far more powerful if it is directed in a collective, democratic way and seeks not to victimise other workers, but to create a world free of the exploitation and inequality inherent to capitalism."

There are always ways and means of finding scapegoats as the Far Right continue to meekly offer in the absence of any real analysis. There are always ways and means of blackening the opponents of the State. And in Northern Ireland we might also look at the reasons why riots still blur our landscape every July and August; indeed the people who perpetuate them. Just what is it that they're defending? All of these cul-de-sacs place the blame everywhere but at the door of capitalism and in so doing allow the ongoing demise of their own communities. Only an organised working class, rid of these naysayers, can make the real changes in their communities, and put an end to social inequality once and for all.

LEBAKKO

LEBAKKO play hardcore punk with tunes. Their latest couple of singles are in the classic 2-3 minute long, 2 song slabs of vinyl. Fans of melodic punk with rasping Finnish vocals should check these out!

BC: What does LEBAKKO mean? How long has the band been going now and what have you released?
L: I have known Joonas (singer) for my whole life, and I met Lale (drummer) the first time when I was 10. We formed the band when we were 15 years old. We have had few line up changes. It 's always been the bassists who have left or have been kicked out of the band. Arttu (bassist) joined in two years ago. I met him first time, when I saw his another band, Armless Children, live and next day I made an interview of them on my zine and we became friends. Lebakko as a word doesn't actually mean anything. Like I told, we were 15 when we formed the band, and we didn't have a clue what we were doing. So we named the band Lebakko. I liked band names that had president's name on it, like Dead Kennedys and Reagan Youth, and I would have liked that our name could have been Kekkonen-, Koivisto,- or Ahtisaari-something, but as it seems, we didn't success.. Haha! I have heard that Lebakko is a slang term for a lesbian, but I don't know about that.

LEBAKKO Discography:
Demo cd-r 2006
Demo cd-r 2007
Sunday Morning Coming Down 7" Ep 2008
PML-zine compilation 7" 2009 (only one song on it)
En Tullut Toistamaan Tarinaa Samaa 7" single 2011
Stantardit 7" single 2011

BC: Who are LEBAKKO's main influences? What inspires you to carry on?
L: At least I'm listening to the music all the time, and not just punk music. Lately I have been very interested in old Finnish pop/rock/progressive music. In the past years it has been me or Arttu, who has written the songs, and we both are really into old finish punk rock. Bands like Ratsia, Lama, Kollaa Kestää, 013, Sehr Schnell, Pelle Miljoona, Sensuuri... Joonas has written almost all the lyrics, and he's also really into old Finnish pop/rock music therefore taken a lot of influences from that stuff too.
Most of the times we are not too wanted to the shows, so at least I'm nowdays just interested about putting out records and reheasing and making new songs as much as possible. And I also like to hang out with the guys in the band. I think if there wouldn't have been Lebakko, I may not have been in contact with the boys as much as I am now. I guess love and passion to the music and a feeling that we have something to give lyrically and a feeling that we can do something together, inspires us to carry on.

BC: What's the scene like in Finland? Is there a strong network of activists across the country working together, or is it more of an 'our town versus your town and fuck you!' mentality? Any good bands we should know about? Is it easy to get gigs in Finland? Are there many squat venues?
L: Finland is rather small but anyhow here are different scenes and they all act and work slightly differently, but ultimately all of em' merge together more or less. I think that people who play metallic hardcore may have that certain competitive attitude. I'm mostly following the punk/hc scene and I think that people work in their own cities, but they inform actively about their doings to the other cities.
Here's a lot of new bands, but I think that most of them don't have any new ideas or does the old ideas good enough, and that's why I'm not so interested about them. Nihilism and self destruction are the driving forces generally and I think that a lot of people in the punk scene nowadays has to deal with different kind of mental problems, and they're trying to medicate themselves with alcohol, drugs and music. Music is a good hobby, but many records could have been let unreleased. Here is still few mentionable groups; Kieltolaki, Sur-rur, 1981, Kylmä Sota, Selfish, Armless Children, Perikato and a lot more, but I don't feel like listing them all..

The main problem in Finland is the lack of activist people. There have been few squatting attempts, but most of the times houses are evicted quite fast. Here might be some hidden squats in the middle of the woods, but at least I don't know if here is any squats which are going to be there until the summer.
In Helsinki and in Turku people are working to get a permanent place for organizing shows. They both are going to form a punk bar and there have been some benefit shows already, and I'm really looking forward to them, but I'm afraid that they are not going to happen this year. Tampere already has its own, Vastavirta-Klubi, which has nice atmosphere and lots of gigs (other than punk related also) every week.

BC: What is the political situation in Finland? Is there much fascist activity? Do punk gigs ever get attacked by them? Or is it more a case of their gigs getting attacked by anti-fascists?
L: The problem of the nazi scene is also the lack of activist people. Here is some right wing boneheads in all suburbs, but I'm not worried about them. They arranged recently a demonstration against immigration, and there were maybe 20 people. Anti-fascists demonstration at the same time had something like 200 people. I don't remember any attacks to the shows that time when I have been active. I have read from some punk zines, that there has been few attacks in the past ten years...

The party of True Finns (which is a populistic right wing party) get many places from the government, but some of the members of party are ruining their reputation by stupid racial slurs and jokes in public and hanging out with the motorcycle-gang members and telling about their experiences with the prostitutes. The party's downhill has started right away when the new season started.
And we also have a new president, Sauli Niinistö, a politician from the Coalition Party. I don't know much about him, I voted for the opposite candidate, who was a member of a Green Party.

BC: 'Don't Pray' is about religion. Are you all athiests or are your religious opinions not so black and white? Isn't it a fucked up opinion that according to certain faiths you can go out and kill someone but as long as you pray for forgiveness, you'll still go to 'heaven', yet someone who never bothers with church yet lives a life not harming others will supposedly end up in 'hell' because they don't? Why do you think that in this day and age people still feel the need to cling to the belief in an imaginary being who's always watching over them?
L: I think that I'm not an agnostic but I'm not atheist either. I'm like something in between. In the countries which have a low education, it's damn easy to control people by convincing that you can't affect your life or choose how it will end, because it's already decided. That's really fucked up. Even wars are not "country versus country", but a "belief versus belief". In the western countries, where people are little more educated than in developing countries, people might be able to understand that their lives are not ordered in advance, and they can decide about their lives. It's just easier to explain everything by saying that it's Gods will. You don't have to be responsible for your actions. Feeling that somebody is always watching you, might be relieving for some people and I don't want to say that being relieved for a false reason is a bad thing. But religion can be easily and is too often used against people and for benefit for few.

BC: Is 'Standards' about how we're all expected to fit in with societies set standards/roles (Men must be 'real' men and women must be submissive)? From your point of view, do you think it's sometimes hard to avoid being a stereotypical man and that you can easily find yourself slipping into the roles expected of you?
L: Joonas writes our lyrics, so it would be the best if he explains them, but I think that I have to do it now.. At least from my point of view, it's not hard to avoid being a stereotypical man, but it's annoying that I feel like I should have to be sorry for not being a stereotypical man. I have been working in the kindergartens in the past years, and I often have to explain to the kids why I have a long hair and why I do all the "women stuff", like ironing and cleaning up. What the fuck? We are not living in the Stone Age any more. At least I'm trying to tell all the kids that it's OK, if boy wants to play with dolls and if girls wants to play with the toy soldiers but also vice versa.

And again it's easy to be irresponsible for you actions by saying that this is normal and normal people do these kind of things. Some people base their whole life on some phrases which they have heard from their parents, who have heard them from their parents, who have heard them from their parents.. Live your own life, fucker! Be free!

BC: What do you all do outside the band? Do you get involved in any political activity? Have families? Jobs? Any non punk interests?

L: My life is most of the times somehow connected to the punk scene, even when I'm at home almost all the time. I bicycle a lot and I like to go swimming. I'm living in an old punk house, and there's a lot of work to make the house not to collapse. None of us is involved in political activity. Me and Arttu are the ones who might be interested in political activity or activism, but we're both super antisocial. My room mate, my girlfriend and my girlfriend's dog are my family right now. This week I quit my day job. I was working in a kindergarten with a 6-7 year old kids. I really like all of them, but there's 46 of them, and that's way too much for me or anyone to handle!

Joonas is soon graduating and he's going to be a social worker and he also plays football in 11th division or something and he's the only one in the band who is married. He likes a lot of Vesa-Matti Loiri's music. Arttu is studying to become a screen printing professional and he is trying to become a super pro foosballer. He actually was in Finnish national team this year but the level of Finland compared to top level countries in that sport is rather low. He also plays guitar and growls in Armless Children and do the vocals for xSpecies Traitorx. Lale is also studying some screen-printing stuff, and he has been interested in studio stuff, and he's like an engineer and a roadie of our friends studio.

BC: Do you get many gigs outside Finland? What about the UK, have you had any offers?

L: This April we are going to France to play 8 shows. It's the first time when we cross the border with Lebakko and it is the first tour this far in or out of Finland. The drummer of Telecommande contacted us, bought our records and told that he might want to help us somehow. He's really indulgent fella because he booked a tour for Lebakko and Telecommande. In Finland we really don't play much shows, something like 5 shows per year. Some people have bought our records from the States after the Maximum Rock 'n' Roll wrote a good review on them. I like the old English punk music but I'm afraid that it's all I know about UK. I haven't been there ever. I saw the movie "Riff-Raff", and I started to use my jacket again, that has a scotch fabric inside. Ever since I watched the movie I have wanted to visit there!

Drop us e-mail to lebakko@google.com, and listen to some of our songs from lebakko.bandcamp.com

BC: The 'Sunday Morning Coming Down' EP is in English but the other two 7"s are in Finish. Why is this? Is it easy translating your Finnish lyrics into English? Do you think there's unwritten pressure from the punk world to sing in English so as to make your music more accessable? Is singing in Finnish a way to not give in to that pressure and to keep diversity of languages alive?

L: After the EP, we spent a year without any shows and practices. I don't know why we actually started to make songs in Finnish, maybe because it was more natural? What it did was that it freshened our sound to more unique and we found a reason to go on. Me and Arttu have translated our songs to the record cover and we really didn't spend a lot of time in it.. I think I know what you are meaning with the pressure thing, but I also think that it's easier to write lyrics in English if you don't know what you want to say, and you can can explain the misunderstandings easy by saying that English isn't not my mother language. And you can make super boring Finnish lyrics sound cool and like your favourite bands by translating them into English.

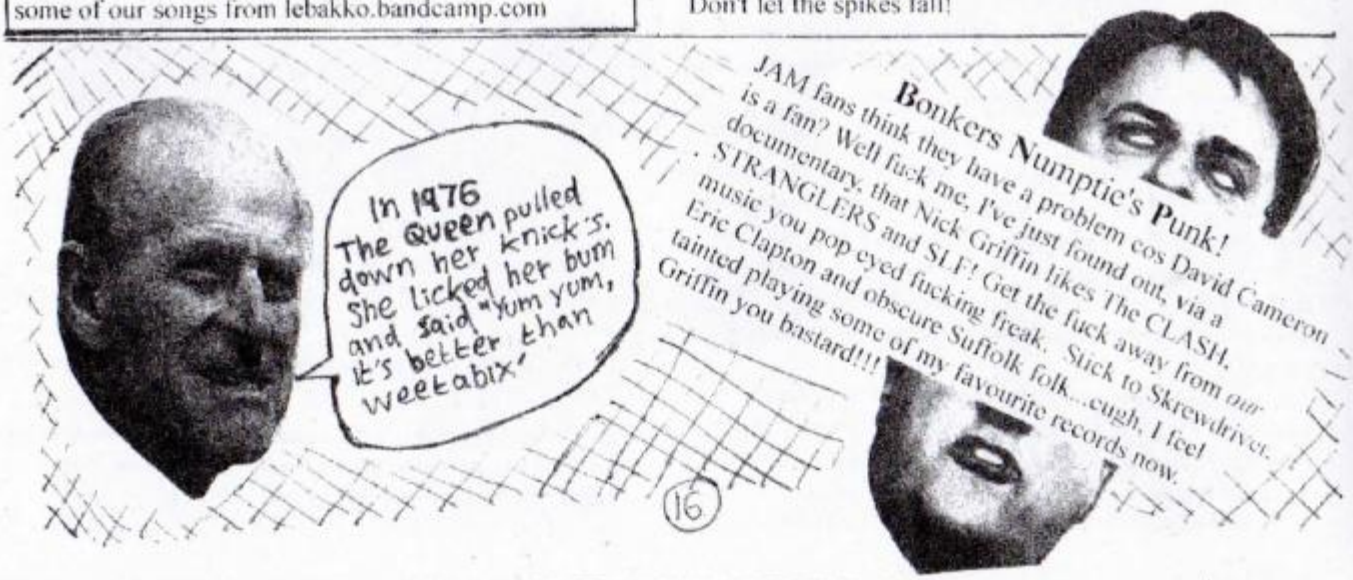
I have written some lyrics in English but I really don't like it. It's much easier for me to say what I feel in Finnish. I'm always interested about the lyrics, and what is the story behind them, and Finnish lyrics just open really differently for me than English lyrics. Sometimes making lyrics is close to making a crossword puzzle.

BC: Are Jyri and Toni real people that you know? Do they know about the song and if so, what do they think?

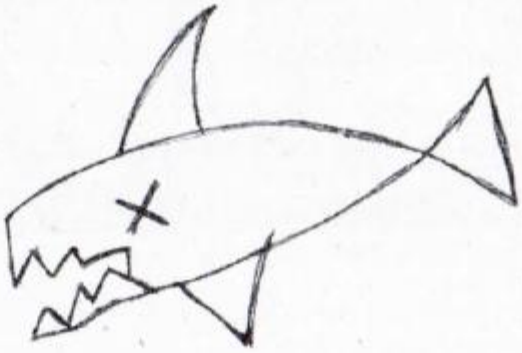
L: Yes, they are real! And of course they didn't like it! They we're douches when we were back in the elementary school. I used to know Toni, and he was a quite sympathic stupid moped boy, who started to hate foreign people because his life was pathetic. I guess the song is not just about these Jyri and Toni, but all the ignorant Jyris and Tonis of the Finland and of the world. The pride of being close-minded and prejudiced about other cultures and nationalities have really been growing in Finland!

BC: Any final words, comments, contact details, etc?

L: Thanks from your interest in our band!
Don't let the spikes fall!



FLIPPER- York Duchess, 7/4/12



It's hard for me to sum up how much I hate York. I hate everything about it. I hate the twee streets and the ghost tours. I hate the roads and the fucking river. The bridges are shit and I hate all cathedrals. I also hate all bishops, even Bishop jenkins of Durham who was an atheist and supported the miners strike; he was still a cunt. I also hate driving anywhere but with the train times being useless and Chpwell no longer having a train station, I had to navigate the horrible fucking streets of fucking York to see one of my favourite bands, Flipper.

I got Public Flipper Limited when I was fifteen and loved it- 'The Wheel' was and is the weirdest song I've ever heard. That they'd play it for 45 minutes and that's it, doing 'the wheel', that's brilliant. If you haven't seen the Target video, have a look. So, despite hating York, (fuck it, get off the fence Mike, hating all of fucking Yorkshire, including 'Murderstain' near Harrogate or wherever it was you were emitted from Andy), here I was.

I like the Duchess because it's in the horrendous, brutalist, concrete shit hole that hosts the job centre. I guess the rent is cheap and it marginalises the unemployed. But how was it allowed to happen? Up here in the north it's all back handers and corruption, I don't know, but I really approve of building something like that right in the middle of heritageville. Goebbels said that when he heard the word culture, he reached for his pistol and while I disagree with everything else the man did, from giving support in general to Adolf Hitler to the infanticide of his own children, I think he was onto something. Of course I had hours to kill, wandering round York hating it. I hate the Shambles so much, I walked down them three times. "You can just imagine the history of the street", the tour guides kept saying, nope, you can actually smell the history of the streets as it stinks of offal, piss and human shit. I half expected to see some plague victim with bulging armpit bunions pleading for a groat. I certainly thought I could smell one.

Anywasy, I digress. I wandered into the venue, empty. Good. The only thing worse than anywhere where I might have to meet people is anywhere I might have to meet people that is also full of people. I can't stand roons either; they're shit. Like planets, fuck them I say. And trees, load of shit, and I'm a tree surgeon. So, the first support band was Fawn Spots and I didn't take any notice of them. I was looking at the beer at the bar and was actually pleased to be driving. Gave it away a bit that this is a bit of a student piss hole but hey, it reminded me of the Riverside in Newcastle and Flipper weren't allowing any bouncers in so I guess that's OK. Fawn Spots weren't that bad and the drummer was giving it six nowt, I'll give them that.

And talking of six nowt, next on I think was Eegulls (note spelling) or, "like watching six show offs from a hall of residence take a 35 minute break from another all day masturbation epic". Six big head losers, each deformed in their own special way. The lead guitarist looked like Frank Sidebottom crossed with a gangly trainspotter, the donkey jacket wearing singer on the other hand looked like part effeminate ginger rentboy, part stringy garden vegetable; the Munch Bunch meets the Ladyboys of Bangkok. One of the others could have been Roland from Grange Hill (in fact I think it was Row-land). Then there was some earnest looking gnome who probably played his own rod better than the guitar: practise makes perfect. He was pulling faces as he played that made me think he really needed a poo and was struggling to not shit himself on stage. Shame really, because that would have taken my attention away from the smoke machine. The smoke machine- woo! I mean really. WOOOO! I actually think I've spent a night in a tent at high altitude with Spotty Ol and seen more smoke leave his farty sleeping bag in the morning. I once farted so long and so loud from the seat of a tractor that all the cows in the next field looked up at me and moved away. I think I'd made more smoke than this pitiful, fairy princess guffing machine. If you are going to use a smoke maching then get one that makes everyone think the whole town is on fire and they're all going to die, or don't bother. If it doesn't make people scream, it will just make you look a cunt. Also scoring highly on my wanker-meter, they drank continuously throughout the set. None of them were drinking before hand and actually, I like my bands really really drunk. This phoney boozing was I guess a break from them playing their monotone songs and at least gave me longer time to stop willing death at them inbetween the sid songs but fuck, if I hadn't had the breaks I'd have willed myself a brain haemmorage. Now the votes from the County Durham judge...Eegulls: nul points.

So then Flipper. I'd spoken to Bruce Loose before as he sat trying to sell t-shirts and he is fucking insane. Someone I'd always wanted to meet. And on stage he conveys this with fantastic menace. As a front man he's right up there with the best. He's provocative, sarcastic, condescending, confrontational but also very funny. Despite the place having maybe 70 people in it maximum, the band played as if it was the sort of venue they filled back in the day (I saw them at the Astoria in

London; this was better). Two bassists have sadly died and the big guy from Nirvana is no longer in them, but Flipper have the same guitarist/drummer/Bruce Loose as when they recorded "ha ha ha ha ha ha ha" in '80. And they were in a really good mood. They seemed to be enjoying it- maybe because Eegulls weren't playing anymore? They blasted through songs off 'Generic' from over thirty years ago mixed up with some from 2007's 'Love' album. It isn't easy to get away with dirges and discords but they just do. Eighty minutes of uncompromising noise. I loved it- right up until 'Sex Bomb Baby Yeah' and I think 'Sacrifice' as a closer, from when Bruce ran straight off stage to man the t-shirt stall. Chamone.

I found the van somehow- York is full of wankers on a Saturday night, definite whiff of farmers as well- and I was soon off on the A19, pausing only to piss on the "You are entering North Yorkshire" sign *(Note to self- put power tools in van next time on A19 to drill hole in "You are entering North Yorkshire" sign and stick penis through hole. Send photo to Andy Cactus)*
I would say shame on you all for not going but I probably enjoyed it more than you didn't.
Cheers. Mike Hunt- The people's cunt.

FUNNY METAPHORS

(These are actual metaphors from GCSE essays!)

Her face was a perfect oval, like a circle that had it's two other sides gently ompressed by a Thigh Master.

His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a tumble dryer.

The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.

Her hair glistened in the rain like nose hair after a sneeze.

Her eyes were like two brown circles with big black dots in the centre.

He was as tall as a six-foot-three-inch tree.

The hailstones leapt from the pavement, just like maggots when you fry them in hot grease.

Long seperated by cruel fate, the star-crossed lovers raced across the grassy field toward each other like two freight trains, one having left York at 6:36 p.m. Travelling at 55 mph, the other from Peterborough at 4:19 p.m. At a speed of 35 mph.

The politician was gone but unnoticed, like the full stop after the Dr. on a Dr Pepper can.

John and Mary had never met. They were like two hummingbirds who had also never met.

The thunder was ominous sounding, much like the sound of a thin sheet of metal being shaken backstage during the storm scene in a play.

The red brick wall was the colour of red brick crayon.

The door had been forced, as forced as the dialogue during the interview portion of Family Fortunes.

The plan was simple, like my brother Phil. But unlike Phil, this plan just might work.

The young fighter had a hungry look, the kind you get from not eating for a while.

"Oh, Jason, take me!" she panted, her breasts heaving like a student on 31p-a-pint night.

He was as lame as a duck. Not the metaphorical lame duck either, but a real duck that was actually lame. Maybe from stepping on a land mine or something.

She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh, like that sound a dog makes just before it throws up.

It came down the stairs looking very much like something no one had ever seen before.

The ballerina rose gracefully en pointe and extended one slender leg behind her, like a dog at a lamppost.

The revelation that his marriage of 30 years had disintergrated because of his wife's infidelity came as a rude shock, like a surcharge at a formerly surcharge-free cashpoint.

The dandelion swayed in the gentle breeze like an oscillating electric fan set on medium.

It was a working class tradion, like fathers chasing kids around with their power tools.

He was deeply in love. When she spoke, he thought he heard bells, as if she were a dustcart reversing.

She was as easy as the Daily Star crossword.

She grew on him like she was a colony of E.coli and he was room-temperature British beef.

She walked into my office like a centipede with 98 missing legs.

Her voice had that tense, grating quality, like a first generation paper fax machine that needed a band tightening.

It hurt the way your tongue hurts after you accidentally staple it to the wall.

Fine, catchy, punk from Norway. The band have history that is covered in the interview. Questions answered by Roger. Read on:

BC: For the uninitiated, can you describe the DANGER!MAN sound, tell us how you came to be, what bands you've been in in the past and what releases you have available?

DM: DANGER!MAN is a punkrock-band from Oslo, Norway. The band started late spring 2009. The DANGER!MEN all have decades of experience, from playing in lots of older norwegian punk/hardcore bands. (2:20, Life, But How To Live It?, So Much Hate, Bannlyst, Barn Av Regnbuen, Drunk, Boyen Beng, etc...), and we've all been friends longer than we can remember.

When our previous bands (Drunk and 2:20) split up, we all felt it was way too early to throw in the towel... knowing that we could still make a solid contribution to the Oslo punkrock scene.

We don't really like to paint ourselves into a corner as far as musical style goes.... but we're definitely leaning more towards punkrock than hardcore this time around :-D

We'll always be making music that we would like to listen to ourselves, and not what we expect others to like. So far we've only released our first LP/CD (The blame game). It came out on Boss Tuneage in the UK and Sjakk-matt plater in Norway last year. However... we're currently working on a bunch of new songs, and we hope to have a new record out sometime later this year.

BC: LIFE...BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? And SO MUCH HATE split up a long time ago now. So what have you been up to between those days and DANGER!MAN?

DM: Me (Roger) + Tom used to play guitar and bass in Life... But How To Live It?, and Finn-Erik was the drummer of So Much Hate. After Life... and So Much Hate split up we formed a couple of new bands called CAPTAIN NOT RESPONSIBLE and DRUNK. I played in both bands for some time, but it ended up putting all my energy into DRUNK after the first CAPTAIN NOT RESPONSIBLE record. We did a few shorter tours with both bands, but were never as active as we used to be with our bands from the 80's. We all spent more time making families and having a bunch of kids. Drinking beer can also be a quite time-consuming hobby.... but... it IS a lot of fun, even though it doesn't exactly boost your creativity in the long run :-D

DRUNK was a stayer though, and we kept the band together for something like 10 years, and we released four 7" eps, 1 split LP + 1 full length LP/CD (and drank a couple of breweries empty) before finally calling it a day.

When DRUNK fell apart, DANGER!MAN was the natural new step for me, Tom and Finn Erik. We just needed a singer, and Stefan (St. Faen), who had been the guitarplayer with 2:20, was an obvious choice.

BC: Why the '!' in the middle DANGER!MAN?

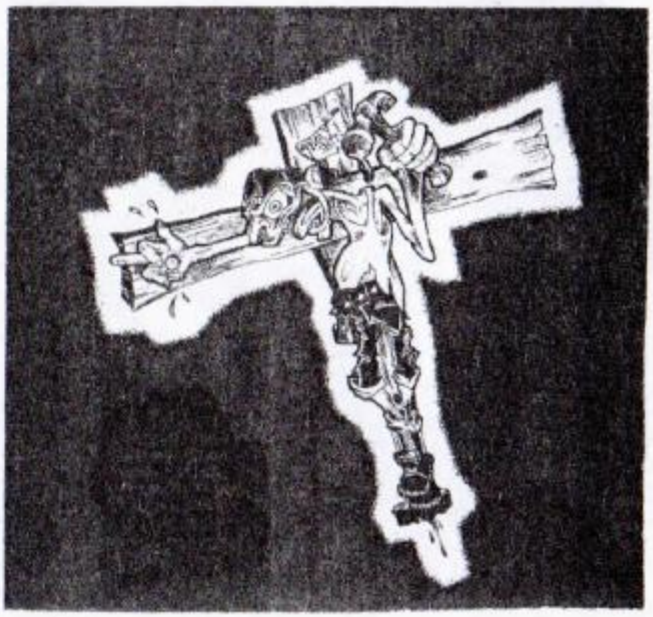
DM: We'll leave that for you + everyone else to decide. Even the members of the band have different interpretations of the !. I think it's a good thing that the name can give different people different associations.

BC: Why sing in English and not Norwegian? Is it hard writing songs in English when it's not your first language? Is there unwritten pressure to sing in English so as to be more widely accessable?

DM: A very good question. I've actually asked myself that one quite often. In my first band BARN AV REGNBUEN I was writing and singing myself in my northern Norwegian dialect. It felt really natural in that setting. When I moved to Oslo and started LIFE...BUT HOW TO LIVE IT?, I was still writing most of the lyrics, but Katja was singing them. She came from Oslo, and spoke more of a southern Norwegian dialect, and it didn't feel natural for me to write in a Norwegian dialect I couldn't even speak correctly. It was much easier for us to work with English together. Now after all these years of writing in English, it gets harder and harder to go back to writing in Norwegian again. But... never say never. Before you know it we'll be shouting and cursing in northern Norwegian again...

BC: Your lyrics seem to be written to make people think about them rather than to beat them over the head with the obvious 'Fuck The System' style of writing? Was this a conscious decision?

DM: Definitely! Nothing wrong with thinking once in a while ;-) I guess some of our lyrics are a bit like the ! in the name. It's up to you to decide what they're really about. I have my interpretation, but I think I'll keep that to myself. Can't spoil all the fun :-D



BC: "*How could I stick to sobriety? When your society has kindly decided to piss all over me*". That has to be one of the greatest lines in punk rock! Who is the poetic genius in the band? Was it a real 'Eureka!' moment when you came up with that one?

DM: Yeah,... well, I must "humbly" admit I'm quite pleased with that one. I think most people know the feeling of being pissed on. Lyrics can be as good as they want, but unless they sound good together with the music, they will fall through, and no one will pay attention to them. I mostly write my lyrics after we write the music, to make sure the end-result favours both parts equally.

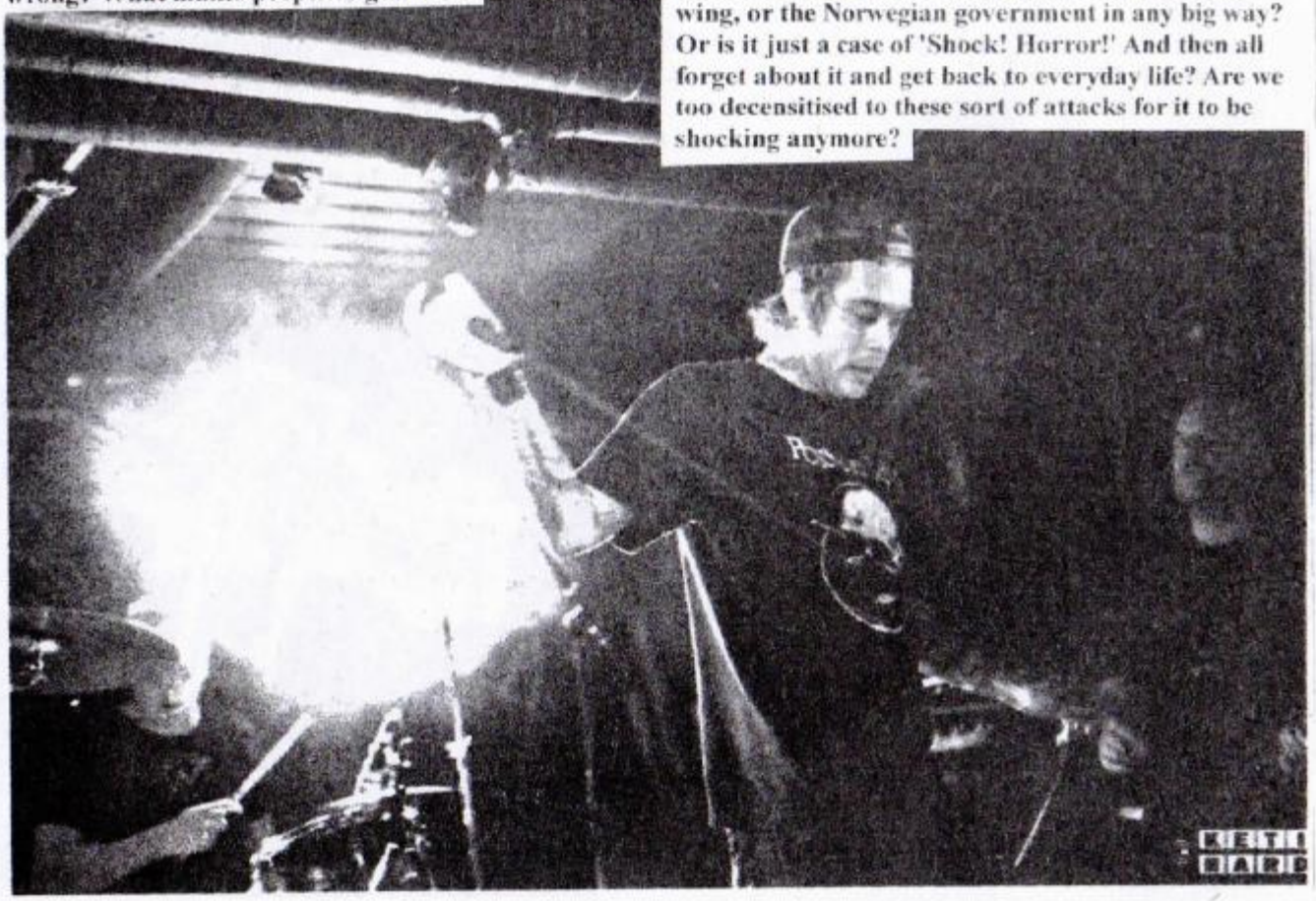
BC: It's good to see decent punk art on your CD. There seems to be a lot less about these days. Is the artwork an important part of the whole DANGER!MAN package? I notice all the drawings have some sort of weapon on them. Is there some message you're trying to convey here, or does the artist just specialise in guns?!

DM: Ha, ha... I've actually never noticed that. Good point! Stefan (our singer) is doing all the drawings/artwork. He's a tattoo-artist as well, and I guess he's mostly used to tattooing sculls and guns :-D
No hidden message... just good old fashioned sculls and guns.

BC: Some of your lyrics seem to deal with organised religion. How bad is it in Norway? Why do you think, in this day and age, that so many people cling to a belief in an imaginary being, and they think that their imaginary being is the true one and everyone else is wrong? What makes people so gullible?

DM: Organized religion is to blame for so much in our society, just like everywhere else. In Norway we have a state-church (the official evangelic-lutheran church). The state church is not as influencial as it used to be (the priests actually managed to ban the Monthy Pythons "Life of Brian" from Norwegian movie theatres in the 80s), but they are still powerful, as they own a lot of land, and receive a shitload of money from the government every year. All Norwegian citizens are automatically enlisted as members of the state church when born, and will stay members unless they make an active decision to cancel their membership. This means that a huge percentage of the members are passive, and don't really care about it. But... the state church can say that it has millions of members, and get financial support accordingly.
Because the state church is run on financial support from the government, there have been other laws passed to ensure that other churches/religious groups can apply for financial support based on the number of followers. I guess this was ment well, but it's ended up sucking big-time, as that ensures financial support to every flavour of fundamentalist crap sects all over (christian and muslim and whatever...)
If you ask me I think they
Up until 2008 there was a law forcing schools and kindergardens in Norway to base their teaching on Christian ethics. That law has now changed, and the new rule is that all religions etc should be treated equal by official institutions.

BC: What was your initial reaction to last July's bombing and shooting by Anders Behring Breivik? Did this change people's attitudes about the right wing, or the Norwegian government in any big way? Or is it just a case of 'Shock! Horror!' And then all forget about it and get back to everyday life? Are we too decensitised to these sort of attacks for it to be shocking anymore?



DM: My first reaction was shock and disbelief. We always knew there were fanatics like him lurking around, spreading their filth and facist propaganda from their computer, overfilled with hate, still living with their mothers (yes… he actually was), but… I guess we just never thought they would actually go that far. It's quite frightening to see that people can be so extreme and non-compromising in their hatred, that they actually turn to slaughtering innocent children.
I was actually quite surprised to see how well the government has handled this situation. The impact of the july 22. attacs has not changed society in any noticable way. If new laws had been passed in express-speed to make sure this kind of thing couldn't happen again, Breivik would have won, and society as we know it would have decomposed from within. (just see what happened to the civil rights of people in the US after 9/11). Of course it's fucked up that this guy is allowed to sit in a courtroom weeks on end, doing his best to make a propaganda show out of the whole thing. But,.. at least the degree of freedom of speech and survilence in the country has not been changed.
The first hours after the bomb, most people accused extremist muslims for everything, and there were reports of random attacs on muslims all around town, but after this guy was arrested and his face was all over tv and the newspapers, it all went quiet….. very quiet. I guess people were in a state of shock. Not from the bombing and shooting itself, but from the fact that the killer could have been their next door neighbours son… How could that be? Blaming all problems of society on muslims in discussions in the lunchbreak was not an acceptable thing to do anymore. However…now, a year later… everything is more or less back to "normal".

BC: Here's the lyrics to a song called 'Fuck You Norway' by U.S. Band The SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN from 1999: "*You aint smart, you aint pleasing. You're just a bunch of stupid Norwegians. When your whole side turns it's back. We'll be ready, set and attack. You lack control, it's in your soul. Your artic hearts are very cold. Call us goats is what you'd say. But we can tear you down any day. You're so proud to be from the Baltics. But I think you're a bunch of pricks. You love the vikings, but they were gay. So take your fish eggs and go away.*" What do you make of this strange stereotyping?!

DM: Uuuuh… Ok?? I must admit I've never heard of this band before. After checking them out on youtube, I must say they don't exactly come across as brainiacs. The singer probably lost a girl to a Norwegian once… or lost a drinking-contest in a bar ;-D
Who knows, who cares…?
I guess there are more of their kind where they come from (stupid rednecks!)

BC: What's the current scene like in Norway? Any good bands/ zines we need to know about? Is there still a strong squatting movement there?
DM: The scene in Norway is small but very much alive. I can't really say much about other cities, but at least in Oslo good bands come and go all the time. Some bands I'd like to mention are KNUSTE RUTER (old school norwegina hc), DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE (d-beat), LA CASA FANTOM (super-noizy drum&bass 2 piece)… are all great within their style of punkrock. ANTISOCIAL REJECTS is also a really good new band. As long as housing is as expensive as it is these days, there will always be squatters. However new squats in Oslo tend to be evicted relatively fast, as the local government has decided to have a zero-tolerance attitude towords it. But… people will always need a place to live.

BC: Tell us five bands that you would say have influenced the DANGER!MAN sound.
DM: Hmmm… that's a difficult one… but I'll give it a try:

- The freeze
- Peter and the test tube babies
- Articles of faith
- The lewd
- Black market baby

This is really just the first 5 bands I personally could think of… You could add loads of other bands to the list as well…

BC: You said you were writing new songs. So, can we expect any new releases any time soon? Will it be with Boss Tuneage again? What about UK gigs?
DM: Yes… we're currently writing new songs. However… it tends to take a while. When we all have a bunch of kids running around at home all the time… it's

kind of hard to find a moment to yourself at times… But, we've got seven or eight new songs on the way by now. I hope we'll get around to recording them + a couple more, late this summer or early fall. I'm not really sure if we're going for a new LP or just make a 7" or two… Time will tell. We're definitely into doing the new release on Boss Tuneage as well. …if Aston is still into it that is :-)
And yesss, we'd love to come to the UK to play some day. Hopefully we'll be able to do something next year, but we're going to need some help pulling it off. It would be great to come over for a week or even just a long week-end. So far we've only played in Germany and Italy outside Norway. Expanding the horizon is always a good thing for a band :-D

BC: Any last words, plugs, contact details, etc?
DM: If you want our records, or would like to book our band in your town… feel free to contact us :-D
Give us a call,… and we'll be on our way in our DANGER!VAN

DANGER!MAN
c/o Roger Andreassen
Ansgar Sørlies vei 8
0576 Oslo
dangerman@dangerpunk.com
We don't have a real website yet... so this is what we've got: http://www.facebook.com/dangermanband
Yes… yess… we'll get around to it ;-)

The worst toilet in the world

It still makes me laugh and makes me feel slightly soiled at the thought of it, but picture the scene: 1993, by the coast in Romania with Dog On A Rope, desperate for a dump I headed for the only public toilet in sight, a small portaloo sized building next to the beach. Upon entering I discovered it was a standing up, hole-in-the-floor kind of toilet. OK so far, until I discovered three problems: 1. The light didn't work and there was no windows. 2. The door wouldn't stay closed on it's own. And finally, 3. Some dirty bastard had left a present in the form of a huge turd on one of the places you put your feet! (Like a foot shaped mould basically) I was practically touching cloth by this time so I had no choice but to stand there leaning against the back wall, with one foot on the clean foot mould and the other up against the door holding it shut while I tried to relax the old sphincter and take a dump in the dark, aiming for a hole that I couldn't even see! And surprise, surprise there was no bog roll either so I just shat and ran, without bothering to check if I'd hit my target. Which just left the beautiful Black Sea to sort out the bum hygien side of things!

(one reason) WHY BANDS SHOULDN'T REFORM.

OK, disclaimer out of the way first: this is in no way my definitive view on old bands getting back together and it's not a personal slag off of ANTHRAX either. I like the band and have their 7"s. It's just how I was left feeling after Means To An End, 15/10/11. ANTHRAX did their set and for me it lacked urgency. They didn't say much, during vocal breaks the singer kept bending down to drink water and check his lyrics and they messed up 'They've Got It All Wrong' and 'Capitalism...' (The two tracks everyone was looking forward to). They just seemed to be going through the motions for me. And weirdly they ended their set with a cover of 'Do You Wanna Dance' which just didn't seem right at all! Next up were THE SHITTY LIMITS who totally blew away the cobwebs. They were fresh, energetic, urgent, tight, got on with their short set of pure hardcore energy, that left everyone feeling like a tornado had just hit the club! The contrast between the two bands couldn't have been greater. THE SHITTY LIMITS made ANTHRAX look like punk Grandads basically! (Sorry ANTHRAX) Some bands reform and you can see they still have the energy, the passion and the anger. Their recent releases seem to indicate that ANTHRAX do indeed still have all that but live it didn't really come across. It's after gigs like this that I'm left thinking that old bands should remain history, sometimes legends but always part of punk's vibrant and important history, let the next generation get on with it. (But maybe some would say the same about zines like this one!?). Perhaps ANTHRAX were having an off night, maybe I'll see them again and they'll convince me their come back was worthwhile? Until then I need to see more live acts like THE SHITTY LIMITS who, as the cliché goes, just blew me away!

THE REBEL SPELL

THE REBEL SPELL from Canada play amazingly catchy, passionate, political punk, occasionally sounding like BAD RELIGION, occasionally The CLASS WAR KIDS. "It's A Beautiful Future" is just a great album, full of sing-a-long, fist-in-the-air moments. An interview had to be arranged. Thanks Todd and Erin for the answers.

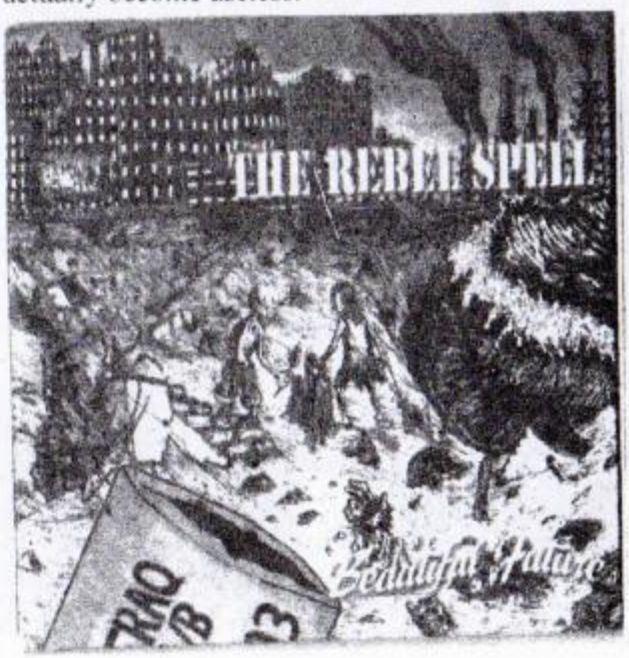
BC: Can you tell us a bit about when you formed, any previous band history, what you've released so far and for the uninitiated, describe THE REBEL SPELL sound?
Todd: We formed in the last months of 2002. Stepha, Chris and I knew each other from our little hometown. Erin we found in a newspaper ad. Chris left the band in 2009 and we've got Elliot on Bass now. I'd like to think that our sound is an eclectic mix of punk eras. The melodies of the 70s and 90's but the anger a touch of toughness that comes from 80's hardcore.
We've got 4 releases out now Expression In Laymen's Terms (2003), Days Of Rage (2005), 4 Songs About Freedom (2007) and It's A Beautiful Future (2011)

BC: What/ who inspires THE REBEL SPELL (Musically or politically)? Would you cite inspiration as far back as the great, original Canadian punk bands like DOA and SUBHUMANS?
Todd: I think the original political punk influence on me was from the early 90's Victoria (Canada) punk scene and from there I started just reading and exploring radical politics through books. As far as big Canadian punk bands I think SNFU has a had a big influence on me and later Propagandhi.

BC: So your album is available as a free download on bandcamp, why did you decide this? Would you prefer that people heard you for free rather than not bothering to check you out at all because it costs them money? Is it part of the politics of the band that people should be able to hear you for free?
Todd: We've always sold our music for next to nothing , our first 500 CD's we sold for $3 and after that the price was $5. You kind of have to recognize that there isn't a way to make a living off of the type of music we play. I think the best thing you can get from this is having a room full of people singing your songs with you and so putting any barrier up to people having those songs just cuts into it.

BC: How did you manage to make the video to 'It Can't Just Be Me'? It seems pretty professional for a punk band. Is it just on YouTube and web sites or do you try to get it on music TV channels also?
Todd: Our Friend Clay Holmes did that video for us. He also does a video magazine called Ear Goggles and has his own cameras and editing gear so our only expenses were a few props and we paid him as much as we could for all the time he put into it. We sent it to Much Music but they never played is as far as I know. There isn't much music on music TV anymore.

BC: Talking of that video, CCTV has basically become an accepted part of society now. Would you agree? People have been brainwashed into believing that "If they've done nothing wrong, they've got nothing to hide". It seems in city centres there are literally no streets you can go down without being monitored anymore. What would George Orwell have to say if he were alive today? Is it too late to complain about it now? Have we missed the chance to stop the spread by not demonstrating enough in CCTV's infancy?
Todd: Someone sent me a photo of George Orwell's home as is exists now as kind of a historic site. It's got CCTV cameras all around it. The irony is overwhelming, I think George would be blown away at how accurate his dystopian predictions are. I mention the masks and padding thing in It Can't Be Just Me because I think there is some hope in the idea that if we alter our appearances the cameras actually become useless.



BC: Similarly the cover of the CD shows a bleak future. Do you think this is how it's going to be, are things just going to get worse? Is there still a chance to prevent what seems like the inevitable or are people too fucked up and selfish to change, no matter how bad things get?

Todd: I strive to stay positive and live a proactive and low impact existence but I really don't hold any hope for the future at all. Human being will destroy everything before they go under but I think is important to try to reduce the suffering we cause as this happens.

BC: 'Uncontrollable' talks of the rebel spirit synonymous with punk. Would you still have been drawn towards punk rock if it didn't exist? What did first make you realise that this was for you?

Todd: I think I would have come to a similar place without punk as I've always felt very adverse to the status quo but I am very glad to have this worldwide tribe of people who share some of the same values that I do.

BC: Why did you cover The Digger's Song? Don't you Canadian's have your own historical rebel songs to cover?!

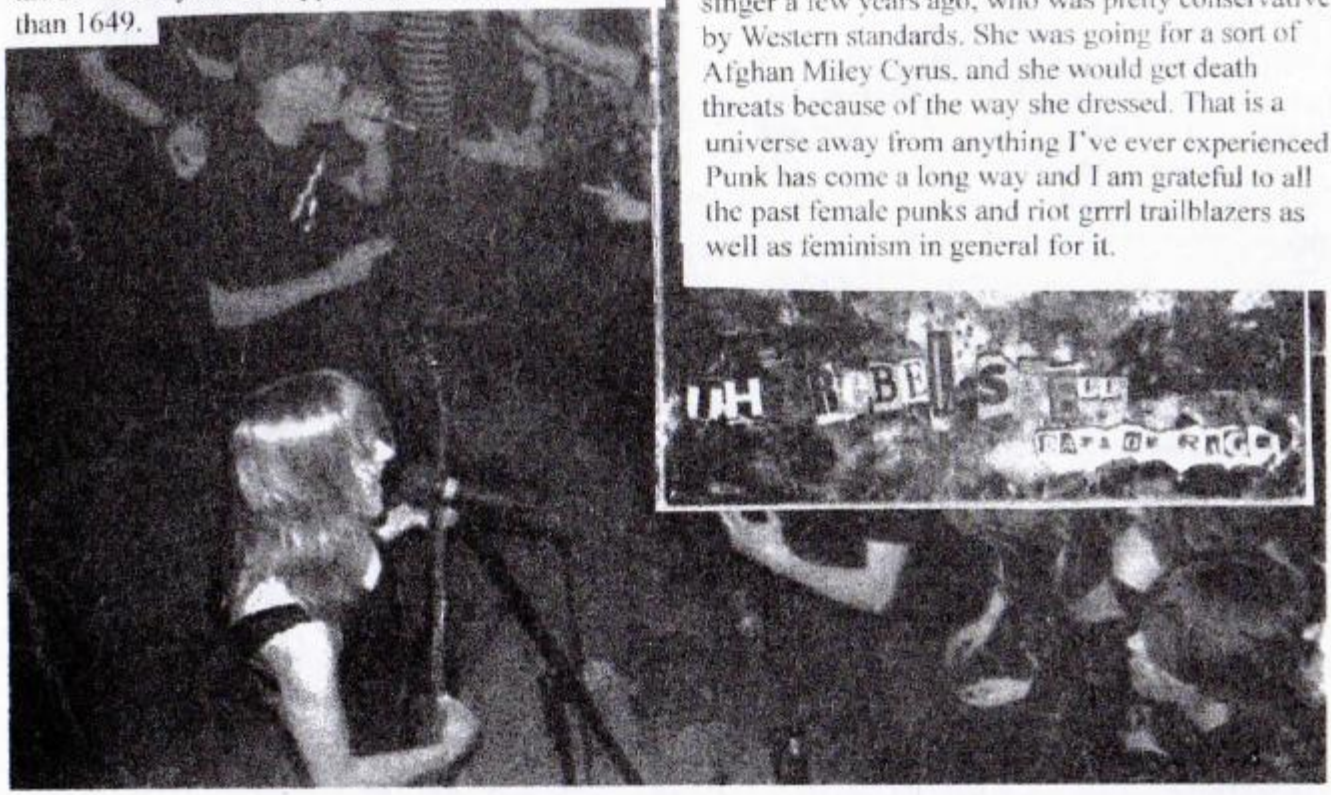
Todd: I think the true definition of Folk Music would read something like "Music for everyone" or "Universally themed music." A brilliant folk song like The World Turned Upside Down crosses all borders and to bring it close to home I would point to the story of the Doukhobors in Canada. It really is the same story and it happened much more recently than 1649.

BC: It shouldn't matter at all, but in this male dominated scene it does stand out that you have two female band members (especially on guitar and drums). Is it a big deal to Erin and Stepha, like are you partly flying the flag for women in punk, or is it really not an issue for you? Do you ever find promoters treating band members differently due to their gender, or do you get hassle off pissed up, macho punks at gigs, and if so, how do you deal with it?

Todd: I'll pass this off to Erin to answer from her perspective in a second. I think we definitely have dealt with some weird comments through the years though not necessarily negative, it is cool that as we've become more known we are a drawing a more progressive minded group of people to our shows and people do seem to appreciate the inclusiveness we try to promote.

Erin: Occasionally we get booked with bands who think they're being edgy by having super sexist lyrics. Sometimes an atrocious band will even hand me a demo or ask what I thought of the performance and I'm just baffled. They want me to get stoked on their song about 'stupid whores'? What kind of reaction are they expecting? It's like that scene from Spinal Tap where the guy doesn't get the objection to the "Smell the Glove" album cover. I don't feel intimidated, just embarrassed by the mediocrity.

Overall I would describe our shows as really inclusive and positive, and me and Stepha's gender probably contributes to it. It's very rare that we get harassed. I interviewed an Afghan-Canadian pop singer a few years ago, who was pretty conservative by Western standards. She was going for a sort of Afghan Miley Cyrus, and she would get death threats because of the way she dressed. That is a universe away from anything I've ever experienced. Punk has come a long way and I am grateful to all the past female punks and riot grrrl trailblazers as well as feminism in general for it.



BC: What do you get up to outside the band? Any non punk interests, do any of you work, have families, etc? How does it all fit in with punk rock?

Todd: I'd say most of my life is pretty outside of normal punk interests, I spend as much time as possible rock-climbing and mountaineering. I've been putting some time in with Food Not Bombs and a few other activist projects. We all work some. I am currently working with disabled youth, Erin does freelance writing and web design, Elliot has a bunch of music gigs that vary from teaching to playing Jazz that manage to pay his bills and Stepha works as a tailor and mom to an amazing 5 year old.

BC: There seems to be some great bands in Canada at the moment (Yourselves, THE CLASS WAR KIDS, BRUTAL YOUTH), tell us some others that we should be looking out for. Any good zines?

Todd: We just did a handful of shows with Kleins 96 out of Regina. Awesome political punk with a good dose of catchy hardcore mixed in. As far a zines the only consistently released zines I know of are Equilizing Distort out of Toronto and Ear Goggles video zine out of Vancouver. Together they give a pretty good picture with what is happening across Canada.

BC: Right, I think that's all, so now the obligatory final words, band plans, contact details, etc?

Todd: We're on the road across the country right now. Awesome trip so far. We are planning to hit Europe again this fall including some dates in the UK and Ireland. Let us know if you've got a place for us to play. If you want to hear some music www.therebelspell.com should provide and like we talked about earlier therebelspell.bandcamp.com gets you our new album for as little as you wanna pay.

APPRECIATE ~~SUPPORT~~ DIY PUNK

Aah, nostalgia is a wonderful thing, and looking at things through rose tinted glasses is something us, shall we say... older punks can do over and over again, ending up sounding like a parady of Uncle Albert. So, I was just flicking through my singles, looking for one to play while I got dressed and what jumped out at me was a record I haven't played for bloody years. Whenever I even look at the cover to KINA's 'Troppo Lontano' I'm immediately back at me first proper (DIY) punk gig, POLITICAL ASYLUM at Leeds Rock City, June 1988. Some scruffy urchin (I'm pretty sure it was Set?) was walking round flogging singles and been a shy but keen, young punk eager to please, after first asking him if it was punk, I bought two singles off him which turned out to be CRINGER's first 7" and the above KINA 7". Both of them still mean a lot to me because they always remind me of my first DIY gig. In the early years of *my* distro I could sell any record at gigs. Really, anything. I'd often go along with five singles fanned out in my hand like cards, walking round offering them to the gig goers.

And people would take a chance on a band they'd never even heard of and buy stuff off me. I even sold LP's occasionally, including, even The MORTAL TERROR/ AURAL CORPSE split! Never mind all the fanzine sellers? (Christ, you couldn't move for them. You'd be fending them off like that scene in Airplane, where he has to fend off all the different religion pushers coming at him at the airport.) Nowadays you're lucky to find one. And the people actually still buying them at gigs are definitely the older punks. Younger gig goers seem less willing to take a chance on a zine, most don't even know what one is. If it's not on a screen they don't want to know. Unles you were there then, you don't know what we're missing and I wish you *were* there so that you *did*, and appreciated what we do have more.

TAKE NO SHIT

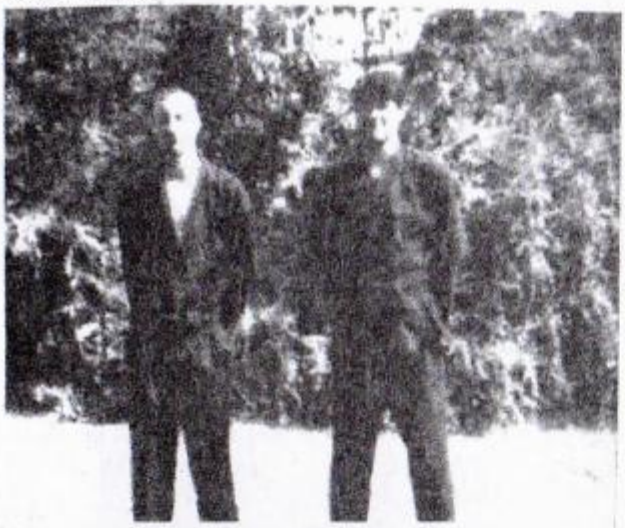
I was inspired to write this after reading a great piece in BLOD zine (see review).

Basically for me, having been involved in martial arts, I can say it's made me more confident, it keeps me fit and I think if ever the need were to arise, I would be able to remember at least a move or two to surprise or hopefully disable an attacker. I'm not claiming to be rock hard and anyone who knows me would laugh at that suggestion! I'm just saying I should be able to pull a couple of surprises out of the bag should I end up in that situation. If you're involved in anti-fascist activities, hunt sabbing, etc, then some form of fighting skills is gonna put you at an advantage. Pacifism is all well and good on paper but in real life if you get a pasting enough times, you're gonna give up activism altogether and the enemy will be laughing at you. Anything from Boxing to Wing Chun (close in Kung Fu fighting style) is worth checking out.

Personally I'd avoid any martial arts that do lots of silly high kicks and spinning kicks cos anyone who knows what they're doing will have you on the floor in a second if you try any of that flash shit! Also martial arts that emphasise competitions like Thai Boxing, Tae Kwondo, etc are not going to teach you about dirty fighting moves like groin grabs, eye gouging and chokes as it's obviously not aloud in the ring. And there's a massive difference between fighting in a ring with a referee and street fighting against some fascists or hunt supporters.

Back in 1995, a few of us in Leeds sabs wanted to learn how to defend ourselves and luckily one of us found a

martial arts group that was near AND was free. The first time we went down it was quite funny cos some of the stuff we were shown seemed unnatural and a million miles away from what we thought we knew martial arts to be. I remember giggling like a school boy as we were doing this sensing exercise with a partner that just seemed bizarre. Now I really enjoy doing it and understand why. Our style was called Kiado Miwa Ryu, a Japanese martial art that emphasised lots of kata, stance, footwork and hidden moves, using your opponents attack to your advantage We were taught that it's not about speed or power but timing. We also learnt about the nine animal strategies, which I know sounds like a corny Jackie Chan film, but hundreds of years ago, martial artists did study animals and how they fight to survive. We were all supposed to eventually lean towards one style and we had to work out for oueselves what it was. There was the praying mantis (trap and strike), monkey (lots of constant strikes, giving you no time to react), tiger (gets you in a lock and gets you down). I apparently leaned towards the wolf (basically a dirty fighter who will use it's enviroment and try to get you while your backs turned).



A COUPLE OF SOFTIES TRYING TO LOOK HARD

Pretty soon most of the sabs had stopped going but me and Marcus (The hawk) kept at it, building up to going four times a week - we were on the dole and as I said, it was free...part of the tradition - and eventually taking and passing our blackbelts (a grueling 24 hours, spread over 3 days, designed to push us to the edge of exaustion, to see how we performed when there). That was really the peak for us, as the group seemd to go downhill after that. The main teacher stopped coming along due to other commitments and although the others did carry on, it was never the same. Now I just practise the differnt katas at home, mainly to stay fit, keep that feeling of confidence and because we were taught the tradition for free. I feel like I owe it to my teacher to not forget it.

I don't know of any other martial arts groups that are free, unless it's a mate teaching you, so I consider us really lucky. At the time we started learning it, a lot of other sabs around the North were also learning different martial arts/ fighting skills and it was fun to meet people and exchange ideas/ show off moves each of us had been learning, etc. Ironically once we'd got our black belts, we'd pretty much stopped hunt sabbing anyway, shame really as I'd have loved to have seen if it worked on some on them bumpkin idiots. Looking back, there's definitely been a few times where I know I could have done more and been more useful if I'd learnt a martial art a lot earlier.

There was actually a notorious Newcastle sab in the eighties called "Ninja Dave" (original). He became well known among the hunt scum fraternity and their 'lads' would try and have a go just to test themselves. In the end I believe he moved to A Buddhist monestry to complete his training. I think he got sick of constantly having to be the one doing the fighting anyway. If more sabs had learnt it too, he wouldn't have stood out as much. I really recommend that if you're sabbing, or confronting fascists, or whatever, you get together with your mates and go learn some fighing skills so you don't have to take shit off the scum any more. I know a lot of anti fascist events are usually pretty uneventful, but what are you gonna do if you're suddenly forced to defend yourself? Sticks and other weapons can work against you as they may manage to grab it off you and use it on you. Also, if you're gripping a weapon, you only have one other hand free to grapple/ block.

There's a group in Leeds called Fight Club, which basically emphasises attack, attack, attack! I don't think they bother with actual defence, just hit first and hardest! They pad themselves up and have someone else pound them, just so they get to feel what it's like in a real fight situation. I like this idea and I know from talking to people who did it that it has paid off, with the right people feeling the brunt of it in real life!

***...Stand up for what you know is right. Don't take no shit from anyone, let 'em know that you're ready to fight'* (Spermbirds- 'Try Again')**

STRESSS

I read an interested fact on the wrapper of a cereal bar the other day, which was that the oldest living creature ever discovered was a clam that lived to be 400! Fuck! 400 years as a clam? Doesn't a clam just sit in it's shell all day, watching the ocean world go by? Imagine 400 years of that! I have this mental Simpon-esque image of the poor little clam repeating, mantra style "*Kill me. Kill me...*" But 400 years old for living a life of ease basically. (Any clam experts out there who think I don't understand the hard life of a clam and that I'm actually just looking down on them from my imagined human position of privilege, please get in touch!). Another creature that to me does fuck all and yet also lives for a long time is of course the tortoise. Now, doesn't this tell us that we should all be slowing down more, taking it easy and not getting so caught up in the 'work, buy, work, consume, work, retire, die' lifestyle. We basically work till retirement of 65, think we're gonna have a great retirement, when BAM! the stress of 40/50 years working suddenly catches up with you in the form of a massive heart attack, stroke, etc...and you're either dead or at the very least brain dead by 70! Happy fucking retirement!! Human beings are indeed a fucked up race and we really need to be looking at other life forms and

how they live for inspiration on how to lead a life with a good mixture of work, leisure and above all, an earlier retirement!

NB: As an example; Gary, a bloke at work, fifty odd, used to be a punk back in the day, liked SLAUGHTER and lots of obscure 70's bands, really lets the stress of work get to him. When mail volumes go through the roof, rather than thinking *"Fuck it, I'm paid till 2.30, I'll work till then and if I don't get it all done, so be it"*, he's more of a *"Fucking hell, how the fuck are we gonna do all this today? We're well and truly screwed!"*. Well, he had a stroke recently and is currently off sick as he struggles to keep his balance and can't move his left leg. (It's unlikely he'll ever be able to return to work now) Think. Breath deeply and.....relax.

CELEBRITIES

I don't get the nation's obsession with celebrities. The lengths people go to in order to be like their celebrity heroes, or be close to them just beggers belief. Just because someone can act, or can make you laugh, or put together a tune or two, etc doesn't make them any better or more worthy of attention than you or me. It's just their job. They happen to have chosen a career in entertainment. Good luck to them. Let them get on with their job and let the rest of us get on with ours. And if that was all there was to it, the world would be a better place. Maybe people would stop spending so much of their time keeping up with celebrity gossip and spend it worrying about more important things like why half the world is still starving or why a tiny percentage of people control most of the earths resources. But it doesn't stop there. We get bombarded with celebrity news and gossip on TV, in newspapers, they even have their own magazines dedicated to celebrity gossip. There's the Oscars and Baftas and all the other fucking TV award shows that we're meant to give a flying fuck about! We should give out awards for best posties of the year and show that on TV instead. (Well, it's the same thing. It's their job, do they *need* awards? Aren't their millions enough? Oh, I suppose their egos need regular massaging too)

I just can't begin to comprehend why anyone would care what someone as talentless and vacuous as Paris fucking Hilton gets up to...anything but an honest fucking days work, that's for sure. She's basically famous cos Daddy's a rich cunt! Or why anyone would desperately want to be her new best friend. She is just an extreme example of why I think the human race, on the whole, is fucked. Really.

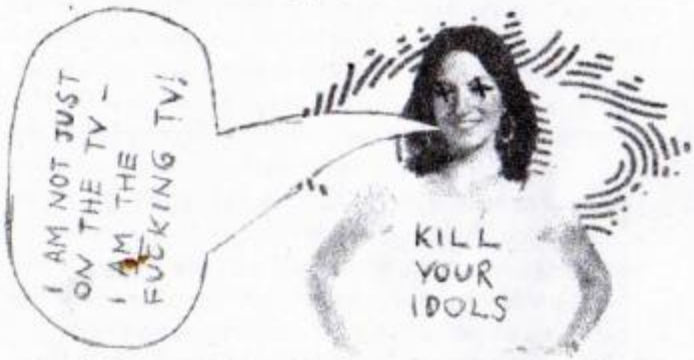
***"You know more about me than you do your next door neighbour"* (Imbalance- 'Celebrity').**

This is so true...and so very sad. We know so much trivial, un-important (to us) shit about the lives and loves of pop stars, soap actors, film stars and footballers and yet I bet most people reading this don't know the name of their next door neighbours. If a neighbour dropped down dead, do you think people would mourn half as much as they did for Princess Diane?

Don't get me wrong, I enjoy been entertained, I like a good film, comedian, I like footballers to entertain me, etc and of course they should get paid, fine. But the levels of pay are really scandoulous. I mean, let's face it, no matter how much the luvvies bleat about a particular role being soooo hard to play, acting, or playing football or getting on stage and playing music to hundreds or thousands of people is hardly work, especially compared to real work like people who work in nursing or building for example. And yet the levels of pay are disproportionately miles away from each other.

***"It's bullshit that footballers get paid more than nurses"* (Aaron Beatup- 'Footballers & Nurses')**

Top level footballers like that Knobhead, Wayne Rooney are paid in excess of £100,000. a week!!! It would take a qualified nurse 5 years to earn that much!!! We're fucked up. Our priorities are fucked up. What's more important, entertainment? Or saving people's lives?



Celebrities are fucking idiots anyway. They blow all their 'hard earned' (ha!) money on cocaine and flaunting their wealth to the rest of us via the paparazzi -Johnny Depp owns and lives on his own island! John Travolta owns 5 Jets (including a Boeing 707)! Elton John spent nearly a million quid on wigs and flowers in a year!! ("But hey, at least he donates time to Live Aid." Yeah, the wanker can afford to!)

Someone need only have been on some shite like 'The Only Way Is Essex' or 'Big Brother' and suddenly people are desperate to meet them, get their autographs or get their photo taken with them. Why? Why? Fucking WHY??! They're just people like you and me who have no particular talent, yet find themselves in the right place at the right time to be cast on these sorry excuses for entertainment. It's just a signature! They're just a face! Get a grip people...get a life!

And why do punk bands have a dilemma when some kid asks for their autograph? There's no dilemma. Are you punks or rock stars? Just say 'no' but don't be an arsehole, explain why. They'll grow up , get over it and possibly thank you for it later. Signing one just encourages this bullshit that you're somehow better than them just cos you happen to be in a band. Big fucking deal! There's thousands and thousands of bands out there. What makes yours so fucking special?!

The only celebrity encounter I've actually had was that I once saw Princess Diana doing a walkabout in Nottingham in about 1992 .....A hard job, I'm sure you'll agree. Anyway, I went to the back of the crowd of fawning idiots, jumped on Liz's back and shouted "Get a proper job!", then we scarpered before the onlooking drooling zombies lynched us.

A couple of mates were driving down a motorway once when they spotted Neil Kinnock in a car going the same way. The scrawled 'WORKING CLASS SELL-OUT!' on a piece of paper, stuck it in the window and drove alongside them. Apparently Kinnock just laughed and flashed the 'V's!

See, this is how to treat celebrities. Or pie them a la Rupert Murdoch. Show no respect, only contempt or at least ridicule the fuckers when they do their *'Look at me, I'm on the TV and clearly better than you'* pose. Every time they come out of their exclusive estates to pose on the red carpet, throw eggs at them. Humiliate them and wipe those fake pouts and plastic smiles off their fake, plastic faces!

This is especially aimed at Davina McCall, 'Nation's sweetheart' Cheryl Cole, Simon Cowell and pouting fucking Posh and Becks.Oh, and let's not forget Ant & Dec, Vernon Kay, Paddy McGuinness and anyone else who hosts a Saturday evening light entertainment show!! You're stealing the nation's brains you fucks!

NOISE NOISE NOISE IS FOR HEROES!

BURNT CROSS- 'Break The Law Not The Poor' 7"
Another slice of anarcho punk from the Marriott brothers, this time with a real class anger feel about it. 4 tracks, including one about the murder of Ian Tomlinson and a cover of The APOSTLES 'Mob Violence' which is given a proper kick in the balls and it sounds excellent for it. You can really feel the anger in Paul's vocals. If you like old anarcho bands like EXIT-STANCE and also CRESS, and you've not heard these yet, this is a good place to start. 7/10. www.activerebellion.com irena@activerebellion.com

CHEMICAL THREAT- 'System Error'
More ploddy eighties punk from this Southampton band. Sorry but it does nothing for me. There's nothing to excite and nothing original. Lyrics deal with the Daily Mail, celebrities, Rich elites and supermarkets taking over. 4/10. boadams@sky.com

CROCODILE GOD- 'Once Upon A Time In The North' CD
This reminds me of SCREECHING WEASEL with some 7 SECONDS style 'Woa-woah' backing vocals. I enjoyed it for a while but the vocals started to get on my nerves after a few songs. Shame, cos musically it's pretty good, meaty pop-punk. The vocals actually make me think of Wiz MEGA CITY 4 and I do like their earlier stuff, so it's weird that this annoys me. Hmmm, I think I'll give this a couple more listens, see if it can start to grow on me. They used to be on Crackle records I think? Sounds about right in summing them up I'd say. 6/10. www.bosstuneage.com

The DOMESTICS- 'Keep It Lean' CD
This took a couple of plays to get into. At first the shouting vocals annoyed me but it did eventually began to grow on me..It's sort of metally (but not too metally) punk. They cite their influences as been anything from DISCHARGE and SUBHUMANS to The SHITTY LIMITS. I think the main band this reminds me of is CHAOS UK. Best tracks are 'Nothing Factory' and 'Dedication'. I wonder if one of the band is into Japanese culture as the label's name and cover pictures suggest? 6/10. kibourecords.bigcartel.com

DON'T LOOK DOWN/ DESTRUCTORS- Split CD
DON'T LOOK DOWN's first track is pure 'No Control' era BAD RELIGION, tunes, backing vocals, the works. Fantastic. The second track, although they claim it as their own, Debs came in, singing along. She reckons it's a TEARS FOR FEARS cover? All their 3 tracks are good melodic pop punk. The DESTRUCTORS offer their usual, including 'Road Runner', a song that everytime it came on the radio at work, I had to ask Gary "Who sung this again?" and now I've finally remembered; Jonothan Richmond and the MODERN LOVERS! Come on! All in all, 7 tracks of decent punk rock. 7/10. www.destructors.co.uk

DREWVIS- 'Disposable Pleasures And Meaningful Pursuits' CD
Very laid back and mellow acoustic ska here and although it is quite inoffensive and pleasant background music, it also gets boring after a while. Good ska needs more bollocks than this! Debs says it sounds like the two guys off that odd comedy, Flight Of The Concords. 5/10. Do The Dog, 65 Blackdown Way, Thatcham, Berks, RG19 3FY. Www.dothedog.com

DUN2DEF/ THE DESTRUCTORS- Split CD
The band photo on the cover of the DUN2DEF side instantly put me off. Can't bands think of anything more original and less posey?! Luckily I put it to one side and concentrated on the music and considering I wasn't expecting much, I was pleasantly surprised. They play mid paced, tuneful punk with sort of understated vocals (This actually makes the *'1,2,fuck you!'* at the beginning of 'Anti Social' probably the least threatening *fuck you* I've ever heard!). Anyway, the best tracks are the ones with catchy choruses like 'Queen And Country', where the backing vocals work really well. They end their side with a nice acoustic number, 'Forces Of Law 2011'. THE DESTRUCTORS carry on where the last CD left off, playing snotty punk with the singer, Alan, always seeming to sound sarcastic? 'Trouble Magnet' and 'Yes We Can' are stand outs for me. They also cover ANTI FLAG's 'My Little Go Go Dancer' 9 tracks each. Comes with a nice booklet too. Do The DESTRUCTORS just

sit in a studio writing songs all day as they seem to bang out new releases like there was no tomorrow?! 7/10. thedestructorsuk@googlemail.com www.destructors.co.uk

GEOFFREY OI!COTT- 'No.1 Hits' CD

I love the cover, which is basically a play on the old Top Of The Pops style compilation LPs, with a women in cricket atire! Musically this is more tongue-in-cheek, cricket inspired Oi! Oi! music. As you'd expect with Oi!, there's nothing groundbreaking here, just yer bog standard Oi! with a few obvious rip offs/tributes here and there. With song titles like '(Cricket) Bat Out Of Hell', 'Bar On The Terraces' and 'The Umpire Strikes Back', you know this is a band just having a laugh, and though it doesn't blow me away, fair play to 'em. If you like your Oi!, chances are you'll love this. 6/10. www.bosstuneage.com

HDQ- 'Hung, Drawn And Quartered/ You Suck!' CD

Excellent, another classic from the era I discovered punk proper, released on CD in the usual quality packaging you've come to expect from the Boss Tuneage retro series. 'You Suck!' is a great album, unashamedly heavily inspired by tuneful U.S. HC such as DAG NASTY, 7 SECONDS, etc. Golly even sounds American. You'd never guess they were from Sunderland! 'You Suck!' was their first LP and had a nice raw and exciting feel about it, coupled with some great tunes. 'Grey World' and 'I Will Not' have always particularly stood out for me. The album ends with a cover of DOA's 'Race Riot'. After that you get the 'Believe' EP, originally released on Looney Tunes, which saw their sound become more polished ready for their next LP, 'Sinking' (Which Boss Tuneage have already put on CD and I advice you get hold of). You also get some demo tracks, their track off the 'Relying On Us' comp EP and their actual first release, the 'Hung, Drawn And Quartered' 12". This actually has a different singer and completely different sound, more similar to UK82 punk in fact. So, in all, you get 30 tracks, wrapped up with an excellent booklet full of photos, flyers, notes from band members and lyrics. Essential for that retro collection! One funny memory I have of HDQ was at the Duchess in Leeds. POLITICAL ASYLUM had just ended their set with a very funny song that lampooned UK bands trying to be American. HDQ walked on in their Bermuda shorts, baseball boots and silly wigs and, clearly pissed off, just looked back at POLITICAL ASYLUM as if to say "Thanks a fucking lot guys" Classic. 9/10. www.bosstuneage.com

KISMET HC- 'Songs Of Strife' CD

Similar to ACTIVE MINDS in that KISMET HC are one of those bands that seem to have been around for ever, never changing and never compromising. This CD has eleven blasts of angry fucking hardcore! The lyrics (mostly sung by Zanne but sometimes by Diddyann) are screamed at you over loud, powerful hardcore punk. Age has definitely not mellowed these scene veterans. The beauty industry, anti-abortionists, extremists take on "religion" and America's imperialist foreign policy all come in for some vitriol. The CD ends with their best song, 'Breast Fed Or Dead' which leaves you with something to think about as the last line is "*Every 30 seconds a human baby dies from misinformation, propaganda and lies*". Musically this isn't my favourite (They're always good live though) and I have to be in the right mood before playing it, but you can't fault the commitment and sentiment, or deny that it's a totally inspiring CD. 7/10. www.activedistribution.org www.kismethc.tripod.com

LABAKKO-'En Tullut Toistamaan Tarinaa Samaa' 7"

My stylus was knackered for ages so I didn't get to play this til about two months after getting it! So I've been doing some serious catching up by playing it lots, and the more I play it, the more it grows on me. It's two basic, short bursts of Finnish punk rock, pretty fast paced and very catchy. I don't know many Finnish bands but this does remind me of fellow Finns, JUGGLING JUGULARS. 7/10. lebakko@gmail.com PML Records: pikakelauksellamaailmanloppuun@gmail.com

LEVELLERS- 'Static On The Airwaves' CD

The first two songs; *We Are All Gunmen* and *Truth Is* are really nice songs that gave me a sort of warm, hear we go, this is gonna be a great album feeling. But after that it was a bit of an anti-climax. Apart from the last track, *The Recruiting Sergeant*, which is a good get up and dance, Poguesy jig, it's a bit af a slow, all merges into one song album instead. I think it needed more memorable, stand out songs like the ones mentioned. As always, sound sentiments so if you want some gentler music to make you think, check it out. If you're a fan, you wont need telling anyway. 7/10. michael@eccleshall.co.uk www.levellers.co.uk NB: After further listens, I've decided saying it all sounds the same is unfair. This is probably the best LEVELLERS album I've heard really.

OFFICER DOWN- 'Thrown To The Water' CD

Great band name which immediately makes me think of Chief Wigham wriggling on his back like a dying fly! I'm not keen on the cover art. It makes them look like a satanic metal band. Thankfully they're not. It's decent melodic hardcore that occasionally sounds like STRIKE ANYWHERE and KID DYNAMITE but mostly this reminds me of LEAGUES APART, espaecially the

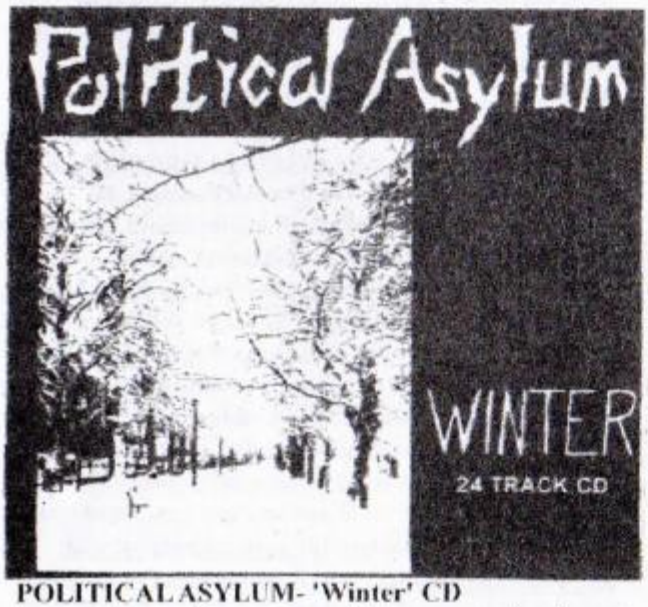
vocals. A few 7 SECONDS style 'Woa woahs' and a couple of acoustic intros break this up nicely. All in all, a solid CD. 6/10. prejudice_me@yahoo.co.uk

OI POLLOI/ KANSALAISTOTTELEMATTOMUUS- Split CD

This is a benefit CD for the Cyklopen squatt in Stockholm, Sweden, which was burnt down by fascists. In a total 'Fuck you!' spirit, the Cyklopen activists are re-building it! (Respect!). Anyway, this CD features 2 tracks from each band and to be honest, without trying to be ignorant to the 'K' band (Please don't make me type that again) this just sounds like 4 OI POLLOI tracks. Deek does sing for both bands and they do play a similar style to each other. But whatever, all 4 tracks are new and very good, typical crusrty punk, as you'd expect. The last track 'Gaza' is especially good with it's sing-a-long chorus. This comes with an impressive booklet detailing the history of Cyklopen and where they're at with the re-building. A very inspiring, proper DIY punk rock release. 8/10. back2front@riseup.net

PML- ZINE comilation 7"

Varied comp out of Finland which as you'd expect, is mixed. LEBAKKO open up with a good, faced paced punk number, faster than their 7". These are definitely growing on me. ESCAPE TO DEATH offer up a pretty standard hardcore punk ditty, NO HEROES do a good take on the early U.S. Hardcore sound, quite similar to F.U's and ANVILS DROP end the EP with a NEUROSIS style moshy growler. So, for me, LEBAKKO and NO HEROES are easily the best tracks. The other two, I can learn to live without! But, it would have been easy to put out a comp of similar sounding bands. Well done to PML for going the diverse route. Overall 6/10. pikakelauksellamaailmanloppuun@gmail.com



POLITICAL ASYLUM- 'Winter' CD

I remember reading reviews of these comparing them to the likes of ONSLAUGHT and not wanting to investigate any further. Then I heard a couple of tracks on the 'Too Good To Last' comp tape put out by HAGI, and I couldn't believe this was the same band! This was pure harmonies, sweet guitar solos and gentle singing...hardly the work of someone being compared to ONSLAUGHT! I tracked down their demos and upon closer analysis I understood the comparisons as they do indeed play some metally, chugging guitar riffs but, combine that with some gentle melodies, a bit of folk sensibility and again Ramsey's voice which was a refreshing antidote to the ENT style thrash everyone else seemed to be playing at that time. The result was a totally unique sound in the world of anarcho punk. This CD contains their debut 'Winter' 7" plus all the studio tracks from their 3 demo tapes ('Fresh Hate', 'Valium For The Masses' and 'Walls Have Ears'). Most of these songs made it onto vinyl, on either the 'Someday' mini LP or 'Window On The World' LP. It's good to hear the originals again though as my tapes are in a box somewhere, plus to hear the ones that never made it to vinyl again is bringing back happy memories. My first DIY punk gig was POLITICAL ASYLUM and they featured in #2 of this zine back in 1989! An essential piece of punk history given the re-issue treatment it deserves. Comes with a booklet with all the lyrics plus notes from band members. 9/10. www.bosstuneage.com

SCREAMING WILLIES- 'Unfinished Business' CD

Christ, last I remember of these was 'Specky Four Eyes' back when they were 'The Amazing...', and then I saw them at a punks picnic in Notts in '96? Anyway, this, as the name suggests, is stuff they should have recorded back then. There's no surprises, lots of proper punk rock with song titles like 'Pogo Til You Puke', 'Spunk Bubble' and Su-Bo Boyle'. Nothing serious. 22 tracks of old style punk played by old punks! Nice cover art from Boz by the way. 5/10. £5 postpade. Www.thescreamingwillies.com

SECTION 13- 'Burning Bridges' CD

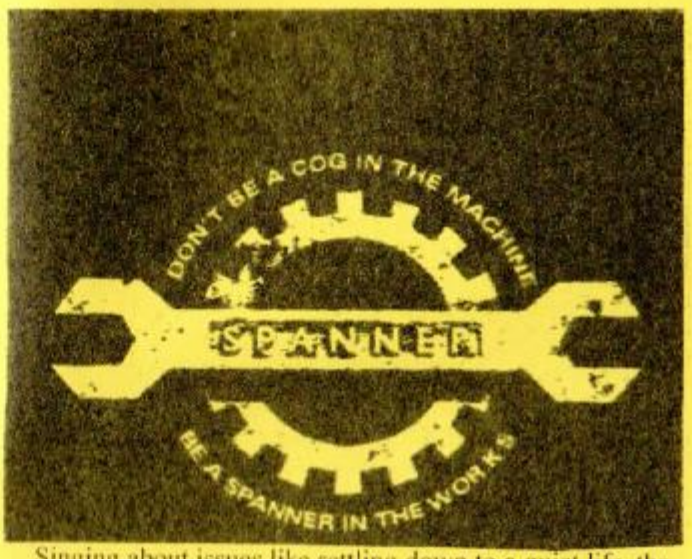
I was really looking forward to this after the excellent 'A Demonstration' CD. I have to be honest, it's not quite caught my attention as much. Something about it isn't quite as catchy. Ian's vocals are harsher for one and then there's less backing vocals and sing-a-long choruses. It's still angry hardcore punk that is very inspired by USHC and I am nodding along while typing this so I clearly do like it. It's just a bit of an anti-climax. Perhaps I just expected too much, what with the DEPRAVED/ VISIONS OF CHANGE connection? Actually, one thing that this makes me think is that perhaps they're purposefully trying to get away from those references? 7/10. www.bosstuneage.com

SMOKE LIKE A FISH- 'Blood, Fish & Bone' CD

Well, it's been a good few years since the excellent 'Survival Of The Hip'est' so it's good to see a brand new album by this premium ska band. Even my kids love these! If you were into the 80's 2-Tone scene and have never given any modern ska a chance, this is the band to start with. Catchy as hell, full on ska, complete with brass, sing-a-long bits and decent lyrics. They even give us a glimpse of where their hearts lie with a cover of ZOUNDS 'Subvert'. I love 'Top Of The Hill' and 'Rainey Night' but the whole CD is a get-up-and-skank-like-you-just-can't-stop-winner! 8/10 Www.dothedog.com

SPANNER- 'Crisis' CD

This has been eagerly anticipated here at Cactus HQ and overall it doesn't disappoint. Carrying on where their last CD 'Intruder Alert' left off, SPANNER give us their take on that classic British anarcho, dub, ska, punk sound.



Singing about issues like settling down to a quiet life, the culture of work, the recent financial crisis and autonomous spaces. SPANNER have a lot to say and clearly walk the walk to back it up. You can hear the passion and feeling behind some of the lyrics. Check out how '*Voting changes nothing*' is spat out in 'Choose To Refuse' as an example If you're into INNER TERRESTRIALS, CITIZEN FISH and older bands like SPITHEAD and SCUM OF TOYTOWN, then chances are you'll love these too. Catchy and inspirational as this is, especially on songs like 'Autonomous Spaces' and 'Quiet Life', I have a couple of minor grumbles; the guitar is quite scratchy sounding in some songs and the toot toot of the horn gets a bit annoying towards the end. I do prefer 'Intruder Alert' with it's fuller sound and catchier choruses but this is still a welcome addition to my CD shelf. 7/10. thespannercrew@hotmail.com www.spannerintheworks.net/wp

V/A "NO FUTURE" CD

This is a tribute to the SEX PISTOLS, The CLASH and The DAMNED. It's weird in that most (if not all) the tracks are really old, like from the nineties, and it just seems odd to compile all these old covers of even older songs now. Having said that, it is an enjoyable, pretty eclectic comp, from the SEX PISTOLS EXPERIENCE predictably doing 'Anarchy In The UK' and 'Pretty Vacant' and sounding exactly like the real thing (For me, what's the point?) to a bizarre string quartet version of 'New Rose'! The stand out tracks for me are IDENTITY's 'Silly Thing', BLEACH doing 'Complete Control', The PRICE doing a great version of 'English Civil War' and also doing a DAMNED song I've never heard of (I've checked and 'The Limit Club' is off the 'Friday The 13th' EP), EXIT CONDITION do 'Plan 9, Channel 7' and the CD ends with ROBB JOHNSON's excellently unique version of 'Thanks For The Night'. Also on here are The BLAGGERS ITA ('Guns Of Brixton' and 'Submission'), LEATHERFACE ('Melody Lee'), ANHREFN ('Bankrobber'), RED LETTER DAY ('Love Song'), ATTILA THE STOCKBROKER ('Washington Bullets') and more. Obviously you can't beat original versions of classic songs but if you at least put your own slant on them, instead of just copying them (I'm talking to you SEX PISTOLS EXPERIENCE), that's fine by me. 7/10 www.releasedemotions.co.uk

V/A "SMELLS LIKE COMMUNITY SPIRIT" CD

This is a benefit for the Royal Park Community Consortium which is basically a community run venture to turn an old school in the Hyde Park area of Leeds into some sort of community space. They need funds to secure the lease. Anyway, to help out, this CD has been put together by a new DIY label and it's a totally eclectic comp as it's trying to represent the Leeds 6 music scene, not just punk. Though punk wise, there are tracks by ACID DROP, DEAD SUBVERTS and The SWINDELLS very proud 'Yorkshire'. Elsewhere, there's all sorts from rap to pop, acoustic to metal. I surprised myself by taking to a few of the non-punk numbers, namely GARY STEWART and THE LANDLORD'S SON. There's 22 bands, one track each, it's good quality and it's for a good cause. 5/10 prejudice_me@yahoo.co.uk www.royalparkschool.org

V/A "TERMINAL DECAY" LP

This is part of ARTCORE #29 [redacted]. Welly says he was influenced by the classic comilations like R.Radical's 'P.E.A.C.E' and MRR's 'Welcome To 1984'. Some compilations are very hit and miss and there's not that many great ones in my collection, but I think I can safely say that this is one of them. There's not one bad track on it, really! (OK, HYGIENE isn't great) From the opener by Finland's 1981 to the closing title track by Australia's BURNING SENSATION, all twenty tracks are good to excellent punk and hardcore from around the world. Best ones for me are the two already mentioned, Canada's THE REBEL SPELL (What a fucking great band), NIGHT BIRDS (New York), Newport's BAD SAM (with Beddis on vocals and they do sound like the COWBOY KILLERS), The FURLOUGHS (L.A.). Other tracks include BURNT CROSS, OFF WITH THEIR HEADS, ENDLESS GRINNING SKULLS, RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA, AGENT ATTITUDE, etc...Great album. Track it down ASAP! 9/10 www.artcorefanzine.co.uk

V/A "THESE TROUBLESOME THINKERS" CD

Wow, this is a hefty collection, lovingly compiled: 42 tracks by 42 bands over 2 cds. A total variety too, put together in such a way that styles I may not have enjoyed a full CD of, I can enjoy one track of on here. In fact there's only one track I skip (CHINA SHOP BULL's awful rap about weed). So, the good stuff, well the following stood out for me; MURDERBURGERS (with some great No Use For A Name style pop punk), the sadly defunct I.C.H, The ROUGHNECK RIOT, LEAGUES APART, DOWN AND OUTS, FAINTEST IDEA and the BLACK STAR DUB COLLECTIVE. Other interesting ones have gotta include FROM THE CRADLE TO THE RAVE (They sound like a rave Leftover Crack!) and X RAY CAT TRIO. But there's so much more that I can't list it all here...AUTONOMADS, ACID DROP, DEAD SUBVERTS....This is an impressive compilation and I bet it's not too expensive either. 7/10. www.tnsrecords.co.uk

VIOLENT ARREST- 'Tooth And Nail' CD

More uncompromising and to the point hardcore punk from the West Country. No bullshit, no flash solos or fancy shit, (oops, just heard a solo in 'Fuck Off'!...OK,

not many flash solos!!) just blasts of energetic power with enough melodies to have you throw yourself round the room, bouncing off furniture. Lyrics cover hidden abuse of children in the Catholic church, the rich shitting on the poor, commercial music and fighting back. These 80's veterans have lost none of their anger or passion. To show it's not all doom'n'gloom, they throw in a cover of 'I've Got Your Number (Written On The Back Of My Hand)'. Great stuff. 7/10. www.bosstuneage.com

WANTON THOUGHT- CD

I remember seeing their 7" around 1990 but not much else really. And this CD is certainly no lost classic from that era. It's melodic punk sounding not too dis-similar to the likes of SNUFF, DAG NASTY and other melodic bands of the late 80's. Slow it down a bit and ad a slightly grating voice. This is a compilation of everything they recorded; the 7", comp tracks and the obligatory unreleased ones too. (10 tracks in total) 5/10. www.bosstuneage.com

(THE EVER DEPLETING)

ZINE SCENE

BARBIES DEAD #31

Long running Cornish zine full of local news on punk rock, football and whatever else is on Alex's mind, plus he has an unhealthy obsession with the U.K.SUBS....and the BUS STATION LOONIES being local, are pretty much guarenteed a regular plug or two as well. This must come out every year cos there always seems to be a report on Plymouth Punx Picnic (Unless I'm living some sort of punk groundhog day....?). This issue has EASTFIELD and some reviews too. Especially good read for Cornish punks but good for those outside the area to find out what's going on down there. 50P and A4 SAE: Alex, Woodhouse, The Square, Gunnislake, Cornwall, PL18 9BW. treefrogalex@yahoo.co.uk

BLOD

I'm not sure of an issue number or the name of the zine that this came with (It's a two zine package) but it's a nice, original zine, full of good art that totally reminds me of eighties zine, DARK DIAMONDS, or even a bit of RUDIMENTARY PENI. There's an interview with WARNING, articles about the nuclear nightmare (especially in the wake of the 2011 Tsunami and the subsequent potential meltdown of the Fukoshima nuclear power plant in Japan), a good one about martial arts and why it benefits a vegan and protest lifestyle (More in depth than the one in here by the way). This zine has an eighties anarcho crust feel about it, both politics wise and in the layout. The other zine has good art too, on a smaller scale and the zine has a much more basic layout, consisting of articles, stories and poems, etc. The two zines compliment each other nicely. Recommended. direwolf@riseup.net

GADGIE #29

More articles from Marv's youth littered with Guisborough kids colloquailisms. This time, you get drawn into the joys of second hand record shopping (You hear that, E-bay kids, JOYS!), find out why Marv hates cricket (with you there Marv, the house I grew up in backed onto the village cricket pitch, so I know how boring a game it can be, though to be fair I did see Dominic Cork get a hat trick on TV once and that was exciting). Also there's a big report on the three day 'Punk 4 The Homeless' festival, local news (for local people), some Jas Toomer stuff to commenorate ten years since he went to the 'Big Rock Candy Mountain', and the other usual bits'n'bobs too. Gadgie. It does what it says on the tin. mrgadgie@hotmail.com

NEGATIVE REACTION #16

This is the ultimate 'old punks'issue with interviews with such old timers as The LURKERS, BLITZ, the UNDERTONES, DISCHARGE, MAJOR ACCIDENT and the DISRUPTERS. Also some letters that are bound to get a response (at least they would have if this was Problem Child or Raising Hell and it was 25 years ago!), one or two of which I'm suspicious Trev has written himself just to wind up all those 'PC punks' he believes are waiting to pounce! trevhagl@hotmail.com

ONE WAY TICKET TO CUBESVILLE #11

It's great to get a zine and want to read it from cover to cover, and that's what I eagerly did here. Cubesville is as old as time itself and Richard is as silly as a bowl full of jelly! This issue is an Orwell special, with articles linking modern times to Orwell's predictions, small interviews with people who were there in 1984, asking them about then and now and lots of pictures of the man himself, including one on the cover with googly eyes (Er, let's have a bit of respect please Mr Cubesville!). There's cut out and keep action figures of Manchester's BLACK STAR DUB COLLECTIVE, more articles on WW11 vegans, Basque punks and the best bits for me, really good interviews with REAGAN YOUTH and ANHREFN. Great zine. If there was a Rebellion for zines, CUBESVILLE would be a headline act! Cubesville@hotmail.com

PML #4

This is a Finnish zine and as such most of it is in Finnish. But it is a big zine and there's also plenty in English. There's a big interview with ENDTAND (in Finnish), Austin Lucas, Brad Warner, some photos, etc. A couple of times they lost taped interviews so they drew a cartoon strip about the conversation with the band instead! The funniest bit is the TRI-lingual interview with PROTESS. The intro is in Finnish, the questions are in English and the answers are in Japanese characters! If you can understand all of that, you're a damn sight cleverer than me! Same E-mail as LEBAKKO (see interview)

RIPPING THRASH #28

This is pretty much a WHY special with a rediculously long but interesting twelve page interview with protagonist John and a five page piece by John on Afghanistan! Also included are the usual heaps of reviews, interviews with HIBERNATION (Greece) and LYCANTHROPHY (Czech), lots of quality band photos and other bits like a reproduced piece from SchNews which starts with; *'If you're the type to buy food, rather than get it from bins...'* Talk about alienating everyday people. How many non punk/politically left people are gonna want to read the article any further?! Www.rippingthrash.com steve@rippingthrash.com